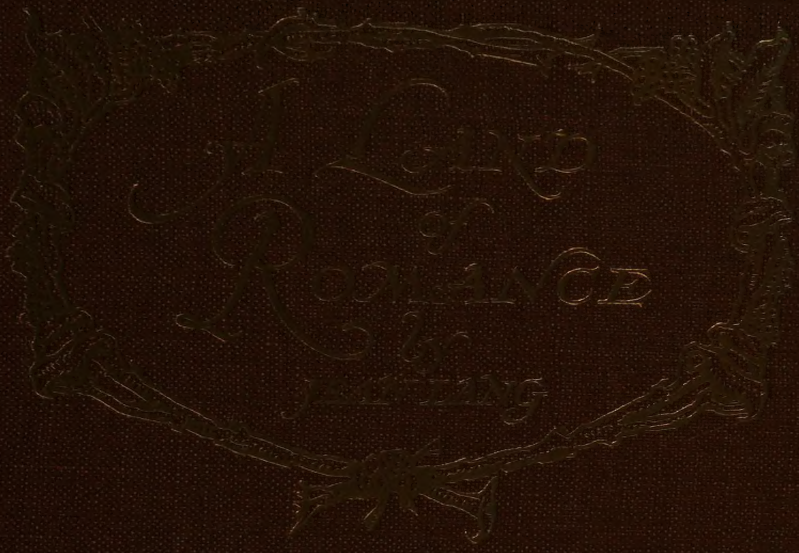

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St Andrews - July 1941

# A LAND OF ROMANCE

A LAND OF
ROMANCE

SUNSET NEAR SELKIRK

# A LAND OF ROMANCE

## THE BORDER

## ITS HISTORY AND LEGEND

BY

JEAN LANG

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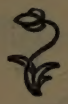
TOM SCOTT, R.S.A.



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# CONTENTS


| CHAP. | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | THE ROMANS ON THE BORDER | 1 |
| II. | THE COMING OF ARTHUR | 33 |
| III. | THE SAINTS ON THE BORDER | 52 |
| IV. | BORDER WIZARDS | 87 |
| V. | THE MONKS | 116 |
| VI. | THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE | 141 |
| VII. | THE REIVERS | 176 |
| VIII. | MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS | 223 |
| IX. | BORDER FEUDS | 264 |
| X. | BORDER BATTLES | 296 |
| XI. | THE COVENANTERS | 330 |
| XII. | PRINCE CHARLIE ON THE BORDER | 391 |
| XIII. | SIR WALTER'S DAY | 424 |
| | INDEX | 455 |

THREE crests against the saffron sky,
Beyond the purple plain,
The kind remembered melody
Of Tweed once more again.

Wan water from the Border hills,
Dear voice from the old years,
Thy distant music lulls and stills,
And moves to quiet tears.

Like a loved ghost thy fabled flood
Fleets through the dusky land;
Where Scott, come home to die, has stood,
My feet returning stand.

A mist of memory broods and floats,
The Border waters flow;
The air is full of ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago.

Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy's day-dream,
While trout below the blossom'd tree
Plashed in the golden stream.

. . . . .

Twilight, and Tweed, and Eildon Hill,
Fair and too fair you be;
You tell me that the voice is still
That should have welcomed me.

ANDREW LANG.

# PREFACE

In 1910, twenty years ago, this book first appeared. Since then we have come through the Great War; all the world is altered, and those who now read this "Popular" Edition are mostly of a new generation.

But the history of the Past remains where it was, although, perhaps, looking back, we are now able to see in it more clearly the reason for the great deeds that were its natural sequence.

The chapter on Border Battles ends with the time-worn tag, *Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*

We who are Border bred can say these words more wholly from our hearts than we ever did before. We own a heroic past, and, since 1914, until the Armistice, the Border has shed its blood nobly, without stint.

There is hardly a household on the Border which has not known "the dule weed" nor the pride which is given, in compensation, to those whose men have sacrificed all that meant life to them, for the sake of King and Country.

"The flowers o' the forest are a' wede awa'."

Jean Lang.

Edinburgh, 1930.

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| SUNSET NEAR SELKIRK | *Frontispiece* |
| NEWSTEAD | 16 |
| THE WARRIORS' REST | 40 |
| OAKWOOD TOWER | 104 |
| THE RHYMER'S TOWER | 112 |
| LONE ST. MARY'S | 136 |
| IN LIDDESDALE | 184 |
| HARDEN | 208 |
| BOWDEN KIRK | 216 |
| HOME CASTLE | 272 |
| IN THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW | 280 |
| PHILIPHAUGH | 346 |
| SIR WALTER'S VIEW FROM BEMERSYDE | 448 |

# CHAPTER I

## THE ROMANS ON THE BORDER

Mithras, God of the Morning, our trumpets waken the Wall!
'Rome is above the Nations, but Thou art over all!'
Now as the names are answered, and the guards are marched away,
Mithras, also a soldier, give us strength for the day!

. . . . . .

Mithras, God of the Midnight, here where the great bull dies,
Look on Thy children in darkness. Oh take our sacrifice!
Many roads Thou hast fashioned: all of them lead to the Light,
Mithras, also a soldier, teach us to die aright!

RUDYARD KIPLING.

FROM sea to sea the line of hills stretches, a jagged ridge, with here and there a peak towering above his fellows. Round-shouldered foothills, green in summer, in winter bleak and brown, are huddled beneath a range that is almost mountainous.

Here and there, where volcanic forces rent them asunder, are hills parted by river and valley from the parent range, landmarks for the dwellers in the lowlands, sentinels who watch unmoved the passing of the ages, the birth and death of the peoples who have made history.

'The Lowlands of Scotland' is the name by which the hilly land is known. But the lands stand high

above the seas that lie to east and west of them, and in that Debateable Land through which the Tweed and the Tyne, the Teviot and the Eden, the Ettrick and the Yarrow flow seawards, one finds the same spirit that lives in the Highlands of the north and in the dwellers of the Swiss cantons. There is the same passionate love of country, the same heart-breaking *Heimweh* when 'The Border' is far away; the same *Sehnsucht* and aching longing for the sights and the sounds of the hills and the rivers and the speech of the country whose children they are.

'It may be pertinacity, but to my eye these grey hills, and all this wild Border country have beauty peculiar to themselves; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, I think I should die.' So said Sir Walter Scott to Washington Irving.

'What a glorious country this is!' said Dr. Norman MacLeod to a shepherd in Canada.

'Ay,' said the man, 'it 's a vera guid country.'

'Such majestic rivers!'

'Ou, ay!' was all the reply.

'And such grand forests!'

'Ay; but there are nae linties in the woods, an' nae braes like Yarrow.'

Amongst the people of Northern Scotland there is a belief that the 'hosts,' as they call the spirits of mortals who have died, fly about in clouds, like migratory birds, and come back to the scenes of their earthly

transgressions, unable to win to Heaven until they have made expiation for their sins upon earth. On clear and frosty nights one may hear them fighting battles in the air as men fight on earth. They advance and retreat, retreat and advance against one another, and on the morning after a battle crimson spots are found on the rocks and stones, stains that the Highland folk call *Fuil nan sluagh* —the Blood of the Hosts. On the Borders they do not talk of 'the Hosts.' Yet, even now, on still and frosty, cold and starlit nights, one may almost fancy that one can hear again the clang of armour, the shouts of fighting men, the tramp of horses, and the moans of the dying. For in that Borderland of ours, north and south of the Cheviots and of silvery Tweed, there is scarce a rock or stone, scarce a patch of benty grass or tuft of heather that has not had its stain of blood that flowed, century after century, from the veins of warriors, than whom none braver fell by windy Ilios in the valley of the Scamander.

In the story of the Borders, as in all stories of the past, it is not merely to the authenticated chronicles of schoolmen that we must look. History supplies us with outlines more or less exact, more or less vivid. But it is not to History that we turn if outlines in mere black and white fail to satisfy us. Tradition and Romance fill in the colours of the picture and

make the people of the past real people of flesh and blood, of like passions with ourselves, who live and move, and act over again for us the deeds that History has recorded. Sometimes, in this age of specialising, we are too fond of sacrificing truth to accuracy. For an old legend may give us a truer and more vivid picture of things as they were than can the best authenticated facts of the most painstaking historian.

When the histories of other lands had gone through many chapters, the recorded history of Britain had not yet begun. It was, as far as other nations were concerned, as though the Creator had stayed His hand; and that there the earth was still without form and void, that darkness still brooded on the face of the deep.

Then, across stormy seas, came the ships of Phœnician traders, the pioneers, even in the days of King Solomon, of the host of merchant adventurers. To their eastern land they brought back tales of sea-girt islands wherein were to be found rich treasures of tin. The *Cassiterides* we now call the Scilly Isles, and our sceptical minds doubt the accounts of the swarthy men with black cloaks and goat-like beards, who sold the treasures from their mines to the mariners from across the sea. Still, the Greek colonists from Marseilles bought tin from these traders, and thenceforth spoke of the Cassiterides, or Tin Islands. Other gentlemen adventurers from Carthage and Phœnicia

recorded their sorrows as they sailed round Spain and through the Bay, up to Thule and home again. But of the people of the Britannic Isles, as even then they were called, no record from those early days has come to us.

It was not until the Roman Eagles had crossed the Channel that Britain's history began to be written.

From the conquest of Gaul, Julius Cæsar, in 55 B.C., passed to the conquest of a people amazingly like those he had left behind him on the banks of the Seine, the Loire, and the Rhone. The Celts in Britain owned the same name as those in Gaul. They were hardy little men, of the Basque, or Iberian type, swarthy-skinned, dark-eyed, with curling, dark brown hair. Their dress, language, and weapons were practically the same as that of the Gauls. Like them they lived in clans or tribes, while in matters of faith and religion the Druids were supreme lords of the people on both sides of the Channel.

On the south and east coasts the Celts were known as Britons or Brythons, Welsh-speaking tribes. Further inland, and on the west coast, were the Goidels, Gaelic-speaking people. The interior of the country, and the north, according to Cæsar, was populated by tribes who might be regarded as aborigines, for the Celts were supposed to be immigrants from Belgium.

Each tribe owned a king or queen of its own, and

perpetual feuds between the tribes taught the natives of Britain, from the earliest days, how to fight and how to die.

The men are said to have been possessed of much 'bodily strength, endurance, and bravery—despising death.' They used the Homeric war-chariots, and the charioteers who lashed on their horses against the advancing foe were of the princes of the land. They had weapons of iron and a coinage of gold, and so would have seemed more than peers of Achilles and the other immortals. Yet, so we are told, in warfare at any rate they stained their bodies blue, and stripped to fight, like the Jack Tars of later times. Like the Thibetans of to-day they were polyandrous, ten or twelve men having one wife in common. Against the compact squadrons of Roman cavalry the chariots had to fall back in rout, and the foot-soldier, with no defence but his short javelin and broad-sword, was no match for the Roman legionary, mail-clad, brass-helmeted, with shield and short knife, or armed with plummet and arrow. *Barbari* their conquerors called them, as they had called all the nations who only saw the yellow Tiber when they were brought, bound, to Rome, to form part of a Roman triumph.

But one is inclined to question the correctness of the term as applied to those ancestors of ours who lived more than a thousand years ago. Their dwellings, so we gather, were holes in the earth, or

huts encircled by ditch and rampart, and thatched with bougles plastered over with mud—a decided improvement on the mia-mia of the Australian aboriginal of to-day. Their weapons for hunting and for fighting were first of all made of flint and stone. Arrow-heads abound in Roxburghshire and Berwickshire to-day. Later, by the time the Romans came, iron weapons they also knew and could fashion with rude skill. Exquisite designs we find in pottery and enamel, far exceeding in beauty of colour, line, and design anything that could be achieved by their conquerors. That they had heavy wains we also know, for wheels, cut out of one solid block of wood, have been found, and the existence of waggons presupposes the existence of roads. We cannot fairly call them barbarians, yet of their civilisation who can speak with authority? We must content ourselves to remain agnostic and say 'I do not know.'

For nearly a century after Julius Cæsar had paid his fleeting visit, Rome practically left Britain alone. Later, its armies returned, fought and won, and came to regard the conquered parts of the islands as a province of Rome—*Britannia Romana*. By 55 A.D. they had forced their way northward, but the Humber bounded their territory, and Scotland was still a *terra incognita* to them. Beyond the Humber lay the land of a people called the Brigantes,

against whom the Romans waged constant war. Still further beyond the domains of the Brigantes, rumour spoke of a nation, fierce and warlike, called the Caledonii. Tales of these people, filtered through the Brigantes, led the Romans to think that the *Barbari* of the north were barbarians of even less civilisation than those of the southern part of the island.

In 78 A.D. Julius Agricola came to govern Britain. Speedily he introduced into a country, through which his sword was still carving its way, the civilisation of Rome. Temples, baths, courts of justice were built. Schools were founded, and the young 'barbarian'—so-called—was taught how to speak the language, to wear the dress, and to cultivate the manners and the morals—these not always impeccable—of the Roman citizen. In 80 A.D. Agricola did a march northwards. In the summer of that year the Roman Eagle first crossed the Border, and the country as far as the *Tanaus*—evidently the North Tyne in Haddingtonshire—was laid waste. As Agricola advanced, he erected a chain of forts, garrisoned them, and did what he could to fortify the isthmus between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. Later he 'crossed an arm of the sea' on the west, in 'the first ship,' subduing 'unknown tribes,' and posting garrisons in a district from whose shores he saw the blue coast-line of Ireland and longed for

fresh conquests. In the summer that followed, the fleet came to support the army. In the same camp, so Tacitus tells us, it frequently happened that the infantry and cavalry were mixed with the marines, 'all joyfully recounting their adventures and magnifying their exploits; the soldier boastfully describing the dark forests he had passed, the mountains he had climbed, and the barbarians he had put to rout; the sailor, no less important, speaking of storms and tempests, the wonders of the deep, and the spirit with which he conquered wind and wave.' For three successive years Agricola's campaign in Scotland continued.

A victory over the Caledonians at Mons Graupius in 85 A.D. brought it to a close, and the circumnavigation of Britain by the Roman fleet closed a great general's career in North Britain.

Of these campaigns we have no record save that of Tacitus, son-in-law of the victorious general, and that Tacitus never set foot in Britain considerably takes away from his value as a historian. We may presume that his knowledge was gained from the experience of the Roman legionaries, and the historian of our own day who wrote the history of a campaign in India from the accounts of our own 'Tommies,' with their healthy scorn of 'niggers,' their manners and customs, might expect to be liberally discounted. But to Tacitus we owe what slight knowledge we

possess of the large-limbed, red-haired, fearless folk that he describes as the *Caledonii Britanni*.

From his story it would appear that the Romans found the *Barbari* of the north much less untutored savages than they had previously supposed.

They were warriors who combined with utter fearlessness a shrewd knowledge of military tactics. As archers their skill was much superior to that of the Romans. Even the defeat of Mons Graupius—when, in addition to Agricola's four legions of Roman veterans, there fought eight thousand infantry and three thousand horsemen of British auxiliaries—did not bring upon them the demoralisation of a conquered nation.

In 119 A.D. there was lively insurrection amongst the peoples of Rome's new province, and the Emperor Hadrian himself came to quell it. Northwards he marched, until, with his legions, he had reached the range of hills that lies between South Britain, now more or less civilised, and the lands of the *Caledonii Barbari*.

It was no light task which the Emperor then undertook. Seventy-three miles of desolate land lay between the North Sea on the east, and the Solway Firth that finds its way into the Atlantic. Across those miles of moorland, bleak and trackless, runs a chain of hills where, even now, more than a thousand years later, the cry of the curlew or the bleat of a Cheviot sheep is the only sound to break the stillness.

From sea to sea, across the hills, did Hadrian set himself to build a stupendous monument to the might of Rome, a vast barrier to act as a breakwater when the enemies of his Empire should surge and beat themselves in vain against it.

Not only was the wall meant as a barrier against the peoples of the north. It was a defence against those natives of the southern land who should prove disloyal. It had its fosse, its vallum, and its camps. At distances of about four miles along the line stations were erected, each one a military city. In addition to these, *castella*, or mile castles, were placed wherever a river or deep defile led to extra danger and a necessity for extra watchfulness on the part of the defenders of the Wall. Between each mile castle were four watch-towers, or stone sentry-boxes, so that at sight or sound of danger the alarm could be sent speeding from sentry to sentry, from castle to station, until the Wall was all awake and astir, ready along all its seventy-three miles for the assault of the enemy.

Ten thousand men formed its garrison, and, night and day, it was patrolled. The officers of the legions were Romans, some of them British born, and the ruins of the villas wherein they tried, in the bleak Borderland, to emulate the comforts and the luxuries of their own blue-skyed Italy, may yet be seen dotting the lonely hillsides.

Fragments of red Samian ware made in Gaul and

Italy, of the grey pottery made at a Roman factory in Kent, of fair glass, millstones from Andernach on the Rhine, jewels of gold and rich intaglios are still to be found there, almost for the digging. The ruins of baths, and the earthen pipes with which they brought hot air into their houses, show that they tried to make the best of the rigorous climate in which their lot was cast.

It was a climate that was merciless to the young patricians. The vast number of monumental stones to lads scarcely out of their teens, and to the children of officers, show us that the Borders were to the soldiers of Hadrian what India has been to those Britons who have gone to serve their monarch across the sea, and who have left behind them in the far country only the transient record of words carved on a stone that marks a grave.

From almost every part of Europe the Roman legions were enlisted. The languages spoken must have suggested the Tower of Babel. The name of the gods they worshipped was Legion.

To supply the wants of that great host, traders were constantly coming and going, and the towns that followed the line of the Wall from Solway to Tyne were as the garrison towns of to-day—places where all the indulgences and vices that can be the undoing of the fighting man in his hours of ease were abundantly catered for by the parasites of the

army. What Port Said is now, the Wall must then have been. It is not easy for us who now only know these moors in desolation to realise what the Wall was when it was 'one roaring, rioting, cock-fighting, wolf-baiting, horse-taming town, from Ituna on the west to Segedunum on the cold eastern beach.'

Yet, even now, Time and Nature have not succeeded in effacing the Wall that was once the pride of Rome. At Chesters, which the country people still correctly call Cilurnum, one can trace the plan of each building with perfect clearness, and even study the manners and customs of the Spanish legion, the Astures, who garrisoned that town by the river Tyne.

The most solitary of the stations, Borcovicus, is on the Wall near the lonely Northumbrian lakes, between Chesters and Gilsland. There, perhaps better than anywhere else, one realises the solitude of the men who paced the eight-foot stone rampart by night and by day, ever ready, ever watchful for the foe that in the end triumphed. There, too, one can but marvel at the audacious courage of the people who, in order to attack a hitherto undefeated enemy, had first to cross open country and then to storm precipices from the tops of which Roman legionaries defended their Wall with all the weapons and deadly engines of warfare that then were known. Yet, again and yet again, did these peoples of the north break through the Wall. Meet ancestors they of men

who took many a South African kopje, who swept up the heights at Alma, who swarmed up the rocks at Darghai.

Stations marked the line of the Wall. Camps of equal size and importance with those on the slopes of the Cheviots were dotted here and there through the Border. The camp at Newstead, near Melrose, between Eildons and Tweed, that is now yielding up such rich archæological treasures—helmets and masks of brass and of copper, richly chased; jewels and vases, weapons and implements, tent-pegs of oak, skeletons, bones of men and women and animals, coins, altars, and what not—was then Trimontium. And when one has just crossed the Border by the Carter Fell on one's way north and has a first glimpse of the Three Hills—

> 'Three crests against the saffron sky,
> Beyond the purple plain,'—

the meaning of the title 'Trimontium' becomes very clear. For are not our eyes beholding what Roman eyes once saw when the legions of Rome had marched across the Cheviots into the unknown land of the peoples of the north?

Soon they came to divide these peoples, the *Barbari*, into two separate nations. North of the Forth were the Caledonii; south of the Forth, as far as the Wall, were the Maetae. Later, these two

'nations' came to be called the North and South Picts.

The Picts or Yeats, supposed to be of Scythian origin, were the 'Little People' who gave their name of Pecht or Pict to the Pentland Hills—wiry little men, hunters and horsemen and fighters, who knew nothing of husbandry. Their characteristics might quite well go to confirm the old legend that Britain's first colonists came from Troyland and were descendants of Æneas. They held their rivers sacred, and 'fish eater' was the term of scorn applied by them to the Saxons when they came. Equally scornful was the name given to the Picts by Taliessen, the Cymric bard: 'Kiln distillers, intoxicating the drunkards. . . . Didactic bards with swelling breasts, who will meet around mead-vessels and sing wrong poetry.'

The secret of brewing heather ale was said to have been theirs and to have perished with them.

'From the bonny bells of heather
They brewed a drink langsyne,
Was sweeter far than honey,
Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
And lay in a blessed swound
For days and days together
In their dwellings underground.'

Tradition says that at the end of their last battle with the Scots only two Picts, father and son, were left alive. The King of the Scots asked the old man

for the recipe for making heather ale. On one condition, said the man, would he give it—his son must be slain, as he dared not betray the secret while he lived.

'They took the son and bound him
Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
And flung him far and strong.
And the sea swallowed his body,
Like that of a child of ten:—
And there on the cliff stood the father,
Last of the dwarfish men.'

Then did they seek from the last of his race the secret, but he only answered :—

'Though ye should me kill
I will no you tell
How we brew the yill
Frae the heather bell.'

So, according to legend, perished the last of the Picts. That the Picts were never exterminated by the Scots, or by any other race, and that their blood is in our veins to-day, may rob the story of the Heather Ale of some of its value. But around these 'Little People' there must ever hang the charm of mystery. Unclaimed myths have come to attach themselves to the swarthy little fighting men of prehistoric times, whose stills were underground. Is not 'the Brown Man of the moors, who stays beneath the heather bell'—still dreaded by dwellers in the lonely

NEWSTEAD

Rede valley—a Pict, pure and simple ? And tradition would have us believe that our post-arboreal ancestors on the Border are in verity the fairy folk, whose arrow-heads of flint are known by the country folk of our own day as ' elf shots ' or ' fairy arrows.'

In reality these Pechts or Picts were only the Goidel, Gaelic Welsh-speaking Celts, whose capital was said to be Guidi, now Inchkeith, in the Firth of Forth. According to the Roman historian they had neither forts nor cities, but lived in wattled huts in the woods, or in marshes. Of agriculture they knew nothing, and they lived by the chase. They fought naked, from chariots, and had pictures of animals tattooed in blue upon their bodies. They were fleet of foot, and their horses were small and swift. Like the Indians of the Andes, some mysterious food they knew, a fragment of which, the size of a bean, was sufficient to keep a man in life for long. To their arms of targe and dirk, in later days they added a short spear with a rattling brass knob at the handle. They were redoubtable thieves, ' looted most liberally,' and were reputed to be able to hide for days in their bogs with only their heads above the quaking morass.

In the years of the Roman Wall, when what are now well-cultivated haughs were huge mosses, and when much of what are now ploughed and fertile fields were lochs or marshes, the little Picts must

have found it an excellent thing to feel quite at home in an atmosphere of marsh gas, where frogs croaked and bitterns boomed. Their lake-dwellings, known as *Crannogs*, were actually built, like Venice, on piles driven into the bottom of the loch or bog; and occasionally, in a moss, the remains of a pavement of timber or of flagstones, and the site of a hearth with its accumulation of ashes, are laid bare by the drainer's spade.

In a moss at Whiteburn, in Berwickshire, in 1868, drainers came upon such a structure. Stakes were driven down perpendicularly, and filled in by a quantity of branches and twigs—birch, hazel, and a little oak—woven together. Inside was much withered grass and bracken, and the bones of deer. Twenty years previously, in another moss on the same estate, a similar discovery was made. According to a workman they found 'caves heaped fu' o' hazel nuts a' aboot it'—probably the drift of autumn winds across a loch—and the Picts' descendant surmised it to be a place 'where the little auld folk langsyne dried their corn.'

'A very warlike nation, and very greedy of slaughter,' is the description given of the Picts by a Roman historian, and in those years when they warred with Romans and Scots and Saxons, they must surely have had their fill of fighting. Most surely, too, must they have tried to the uttermost

what the historian gave as one of their most valuable characteristics: 'They can endure hunger, cold, and any labour whatsoever.'

To cope with these people in 208 A.D. the Emperor Severus came to Britain. He was a feeble, gouty old man of over threescore, but he had an indomitable spirit. Accompanied by his two profligate sons, an army gathered from all quarters, and his whole court, he came to stamp out an insurrection. For Lupus, a Roman general, had leagued himself with the Border folk, and the whole of Maeatia was in arms against the Emperor. So frail was the old man that he had to be borne on a litter, yet, as he led his vast army northwards, past the Wall, through the Borders, and on further still, to 'the extremity of the island,' he endured a campaign of the most rigorous hardship. The country he marched through was more or less of a jungle. For mile upon mile there stretched dense forests, with thick coverts of hazel, birch, and oak, which sheltered not only wolves and bears, ready to pick up any straggler, but which served as magnificent hiding-places for an ever-vigilant enemy. The huge fierce white cattle, whose degenerate descendants are still to be seen at Chillingham, were a terror to the soldiers. And when one sees the skulls and horns that Border mosses still disclose, one does not marvel. In Selkirkshire the skull of a urus, as the enormous brutes were then

called, has been found with a Roman spear embedded in it.

Far up their sides the hills were clothed with trees, behind each of which might—and frequently did—lurk an unseen enemy. The flat lands and valleys were constantly found to be quaking bogs or reedy marshes. There stags and badgers, wolves and bears, might drink in safety, and amongst otters and beavers, herons and wild duck, the light-footed natives of the land found sanctuary and home, while the armour-clad legions of Rome were heavily handicapped.

As in the days of the War of Scottish Independence, it was a guerilla warfare that went on. The skirts of the army were harassed by the enemy incessantly and at every turn, and yet never once did the Roman legions encounter their foe in any big engagement. The wolves north of the Wall must have grown fat during that campaign, for in three years Severus is said to have lost fifty thousand men. Nobly did the old man grapple with his difficulties. He had causeways formed through the marshes by which his soldiers could reach their foes and fight them on a firm footing. He had forests hewn down, bridges constructed, forts and walls strengthened, and roads carried over the hills. To those days we may probably date Watling Street (Saxon *Wathol*, a road or way), and the Wheel Causeway. The former begins at the entrenchments of Chew Green on the Coquet, proceeds

north-west across the Cheviots, and runs to within a mile of St. Boswells village, in Roxburghshire, disappearing there to reappear at Newstead (Trimontium) where it crosses the Tweed, to appear again and cross the moors on Soutra Hill. The 'Wheel Causey,' of more uncertain origin, runs through the wilds of Cumberland, across the Border, and is supposed to be a continuation of the Roman 'Maiden Way.'

Finally, having gained a temporary triumph, Severus got so far homewards as York, and there he died, but not before he had heard that all his labours had been in vain, and Caledonians and Maetae were again defying him.

Short were the reigns of the emperors who followed Severus. Emperor succeeded emperor, and assassination awaited each in turn. In Rome was intrigue, jealousy, murder. On the Wall the legions kept their watch. The Three Hundred Years' War still went on.

Innumerable were the gods that were worshipped on the Wall. The Romans had found peoples bowing down to strange gods. Many of these were only their own deities under other names. Many others they adopted as their own. The Celts found 'spirits in trees, gods in the running brooks, temples in stones, and mystery everywhere.' Their religion was pantheistic. They believed in the transmigration of souls.

'I have been in many shapes before I attained

a congenial form. I have been a narrow blade of a sword, I have been a drop in the air, I have been a shining star, I have been a word in a book, I have been a book in the beginning, I have been a light in a lantern a year and a half, I have been a bridge for passing over threescore rivers; I have journeyed as an eagle, I have been a boat on the sea, I have been a director in battle, I have been a sword in the hand, I have been a shield in fight, I have been the string of a harp, I have been enchanted for a year in the foam of water. There is nothing in which I have not been.' So sings the bard Taliessen.

The pagan was buried with his sword beside him, food for his awaking ready at his hand, and his horse and dog and favourite servants were slaughtered to bear him company. When we look at an officer's funeral of the present day, do we realise that we are perpetuating the burial rites of pagan times?

The religion of the Celts and of their high priests, the Druids, came from the East, and was very much that of the Persians. They worshipped the sun and elemental fire, and the Belling Hill and Bellingham in the Cheviots, the Bel Hill near St. Abbs, Astaroth, a hill in Beaumont Water, and many another place-name still speak to us of the days when our forefathers prayed to the sun and to the moon. Only of late years have the Beltane fires on Midsummer Eve been discontinued on the Border hills. At

Peebles, to this day, we have the Beltane feast and the Beltane queen; and is not the girl who washes her face in May dew still paying homage to the fair sun god?

In the Borders we may find but few traces of sun worship, but we have not to go very far north in Scotland to find survivals of passing through the fire to Baal, of strange ceremonials to provide for the safety of man and beast by going in procession sunwise, of invocations to the Virgin and the saints that begin by the suppliant facing the sun and kissing a hand towards it. But the hearts of those who pray are void of offence, for Christianity was grafted on to Paganism in early days by saintly hands and pure hearts that were not swift to see evil. To their converts they were not likely to apply the words of Job, 'If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above.'

In a moss in Liddesdale, between the parishes of Castleton and Canobie, there is a Druids' cairn, cromlech, and circle. The Ninestanerigg is supposed to be Druidical, and all over the Borderland are traces of the places where were practised mysteries that Egypt and Phrygia and Phœnicia knew.

Only rough-hewn stones, uncertain 'circles,' and quite uncertified hills and mounds called 'Druidical,' are left to remind us of the priests that ruled our forefathers. But there is a legend that tells us that the souls of even the virtuous Druids could not enter a Christian Heaven; they were given a Heaven of their own, a Paradise of pleasant islands, called the Green Isles of the Ocean. No one knows where those fair islands lie, but if you go to St. David's Churchyard in Wales, and from there take a turf and stand upon it on the seashore, you may behold the green islands, floating out on the waves, far, far away. In bygone days, they say, the Druids would sometimes come across the sea and carry away the Welsh in their boats. And he who visited the Green Isles imagined on his return that he had been absent for only a few hours, whereas whole centuries had passed away.

By the Roman authorities Druidism was put down with a stern hand. The conquering nation must in every age do its best to impose its own religion on the natives of the land it would add to its empire. But the men on the Wall—Gauls, Spaniards, Dutchmen, Germans, Britons, Roman citizens—all the charivari and mixture of races that were dumped down in one vast camp on foreign soil, evidently saw no harm in adding one god, more or less, to their already complete list of deities. Coventina, a local water nymph, is responsible for a well at Carrawburgh

(Procolitia), where a rich treasure trove of about twenty thousand coins of gold, silver and brass and jewels, gifts of her worshippers—and amongst other things a human skull full of money—was found by the excavators. Minerva, as mother of the gods, with her lunar crescents to identify her with the moon, had, of course, many altars in her honour. Another altar bears the inscription :—

> 'Eutychus, a freedman of the consul, dedicates this to Sylvanus Pantheus, for the safety of the Tribune Rufinus and his wife Lucilla.'

But apparently the great god Pan must have been making music 'down by the reeds in the river,' and heeded not the prayers of Eutychus, for, according to an epitaph in the chancel of Elsden Church in Northumberland, Lucilla buried her husband, who died in the prime of his life, not under blue Italian skies, but

> '. . . on the grey hill
> Where rains weep, and the curlews shrill,
> And the brown water wanders by.'

Mithras, god of the sun, shared with the other gods the worship of the men on the Wall. As one looks back across the ages, one can well understand why Mithras should have been a god beloved by the generations of soldiers who endured hardness in a foreign land, and who reared a cavern temple at Borcovicus, where now the mountain

heartsease grows, where the sheep scurry away, fearful at the sound of a human step, and where the wail of the curlew and cry of the pewit are carried far across a desolation of moor and sky.

The Mysteries of Mithras were celebrated in Thrace, Egypt, Phœnicia, and nearly all the lands of the East, and to Rome the religion was brought by Eastern traders. At the time that the Romans built the Wall it was a fashionable prevailing form of worship all over the western part of the Roman Empire. No one could be admitted into the mysteries of the Persian sun god until he had undergone many trials. He had to pass through fire and water, to brave the opposing sword, to undergo the most austere fasts, the most gruesome terrors, without shrinking or complaining. Should his courage fail him, he was deemed unworthy and cast out as profane. The initiated were instructed in the doctrines of Pythagoras and Plato, so as to be fitted for the enjoyment of intellectual happiness in a future state. It is said that a devotee had to pass through eighty different sorts of trials, and if he bore them unflinchingly and played the man he was thenceforth designated a liege soldier of Mithras, and one of the Twice Born. Human sacrifice and other horrors are declared to have been parts of it; but it was a religion full of mysticism and symbolism. An image of Mithras, found on the Wall, is surrounded by the signs of the

Zodiac, and in the purple dawn the prayers of the faithful ascended to the Eastern god from the chilly northern land.

Images we find everywhere in that scarcely explored relic of a dead empire. The shepherd, the peasant, still constantly finds sculptured centurial stones, rude carvings of the boar of the Twentieth Legion, the sea-goat or the Pegasus of the Second; coins, bronze bracelets, gold beads and other jewels, weapons and other things that make the heart of the antiquary sing for joy. One poor man at Bremenium (now Rowchester) in digging his garden is said to have found treasure enough to keep him out of want for the rest of his days.

Even now, in the ruins of the stations, we can see the marks of the war chariots and heavy wains of merchandise deep worn into the stone; even now can see where the soldier from Spain or Batavia sharpened his blade as he gossiped at the gate, and can picture the Barbarian in the guise of a legionary of the great Roman Empire sitting in the guard-house, tearing with his teeth the savoury piece of roast deer or of wild boar, the bones of which still thickly litter the floors of the guard-chambers. Still, near the Wall, and almost wherever Rome laid her civilising hand, we can trace the terraces on the hillsides, where they cultivated their crops in the same way that we now see vines grown on Italian soil.

Amongst the ruins at Cilurnum, too, we still come across wild flowers that must in those long dead days have been brought by an exile from across the seas. There is a saxifrage, the *Erinus Alpinus* (a Swiss plant), and the little *Corydalis lutea*, whose home is in the Roman Campagna.

> 'A Roman flower in English fields—
> As bright as long ago.'

The stations of the Wall have been used as a quarry by the dwellers in the neighbourhood for century after century, and each year the excavated buildings grow more like ruins. In 1830, says Hodgson, whose work on Northumberland and on the antiquities of the Wall is monumental, the walls of one of the rooms of a building at Caervorran, then excavated, 'were so strongly and beautifully painted that their colours glittered in the sun like stained glass.' Their colours have faded now. The stones on which emperors have trod are made into drystone dykes; numerous memorial stones and altars are built into common steps or farmhouses; stone coffins that contained the ashes and jewels of Roman patricians are used as pig troughs. *Sic transit.*

If one wishes to have the story of the last years of the Wall made living and real, it is to fiction that we must go. Mr. Kipling has given us, in the story of Parnesius, centurion of the Thirtieth Legion,

a noble picture of two liege soldiers of Mithras, their god, and Maximus, their emperor, and of how they tholed and overcame.

Those last years in Britain were gloomy ones for the friends of Rome. Across the sea there were Goths and Vandals to be dealt with, and one Roman, greedy for imperial power, fought against another. One tried legion after another was drafted away from Britain to fight in Gaul. The Wall was no longer buttressed by seasoned soldiers.

As Rome's power in Britain weakened, the foes of Rome grew more daring. Not only now were the Picts constantly watching to find a weak spot in the Roman barrier, and ready to storm and take it at any cost, but with them were leagued the Attacotti from the far north, who were credited by the Romans with being cannibals, and tribes of fierce warriors called Scots, who had sailed from Ireland and landed on the western coast. Now, too, grew bolder an enemy who from time to time had swooped like predatory sea-bird across the grey North Sea. Sometimes they lost, sometimes they won, but always they fought fiercely and vindictively, and now Saxon and Frank, the 'Winged Hats,' the grey sea-wolves, 'the heathen of the Northern Sea,' had come to stay.

To the rescue came Theodosius, and, for a little time, he managed to make a stand against them.

Triumphantly he re-named the lands between the two walls 'Valentia,' a new province for the Emperor Valens. Many of the Attacotti he enlisted as soldiers of the Empire and drafted to Gaul. Obviously the reputed flesh-eaters were not particular as to what banner they fought under, so long as they got their 'fill o' fechtin'.'

Maximus, the Iberian, who had fought under Theodosius in Britain, fought battles against Picts and Scots and won them, before he drained, and drained, and drained again, Britain and the Wall of the best of their fighting blood. Again and again the Wall was broken through; again and again the soldiers of the Empire filled up the breaches as best they could; strove, as best they could, to drive back the foe by which they were so hopelessly outnumbered.

From the west came Scots, from the north came the Picts. The 'Winged Hats' far surpassed in numbers the brass-helmeted soldiers of Rome. The Romano-Britons wrote a piteous appeal addressed 'Aetio ter Consuli,' imploring assistance against the *Barbari*. 'The Barbari,' they say, 'drive us to the sea, while the sea throws us back on the Barbari; thus two modes of death await us—we are either slain or drowned.'

But they 'asked grace of a graceless face.' From Honorius there came a letter informing them that

they must protect themselves. Britain was abandoned. In 410 the Roman Eagles left the Border, to be seen there no more.

The Romano-Britons on the Wall still made a desperate stand. 'A timorous guard,' says the historian, 'was placed upon the Wall, where they pined away, day and night, in the utmost fear. On the other side, the enemy attacked with hooked weapons, by which the cowardly defendants were dragged from the Wall, and dashed against the ground.'

When the end came we do not know.

Was it one night when snow fell on moor and on fen, muffling every footfall, deadening every sound that reached the watchers on the Wall?—a night when the wind blew shrewd and chill from the grey Northern Sea, and moaned and wuthered through the hills, rocking the guard-houses where the scared sentries sat and waited? Or was it on one of the short summer nights, when daylight scarcely dies, but only sleeps; when the white moon still hung over the western hills, while the sun crept up behind the jagged blue line that hid from the eyes of the watchers the sea beyond? Would that one might know exactly when and how it was that the peoples of the northern land, the only nation that Rome could never tame, no longer beat themselves against the Wall in vain, but rushed through it with the force of a winter storm.

Through it they came, and destruction to the mighty work of a mighty Empire they dealt unsparingly. Through it, with shout of triumph, came Pict and Scot and Saxon, and death was meted out without mercy to the few that kept the Wall. Rome was vanquished. The Barbari had triumphed.

And now the winds sweep across the ruined theatre where, for a good three hundred years, men hoped and feared, and fought and died; and only the cries of wild birds break the solitude.

## CHAPTER II

### THE COMING OF ARTHUR

For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land;
And still from time to time the heathen host
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.

TENNYSON.

WITH the departure of the Eagles, the history of the Border becomes, for the accurate historian, irritatingly impossible. He can only guess at things, and vainly strain his eyes through a mist of uncertainties, unable to discern with any approach to exactitude the identity of the dim figures that march in procession through the grey fog of tradition.

For the child, who has no use for dates nor for solid facts, it is quite otherwise. Those unchronicled years, when there seems to be no stern boundary set between the land of Long Ago and the kingdom of Might-have-Been—the fairy realm—have a charm that is all their own.

And is it not possible that the child mind, the mind of Romance, which can

> 'Touch with its finger-tips
> The ivory gates and golden,'

may also be not so very far away from the true history of those misty years ?

The Romans went, and left behind them, to stand or to fall, a population of Romanised Celts, and of those auxiliaries from England and from Gaul who chose to remain behind.

They may not have been 'Romans,' properly speaking ; natives they, maybe, of Iberia, of Switzerland, of the Low Countries, of the Rhineland, or of Gaul. Yet they had known the greatness of Rome. They had fought under the Eagles. The best that was to be known in those days of Roman culture and of Celtic art was known to them. And now they and their sons — born, maybe, of some British mother, grey-eyed and amber-haired—had to face the assaults of foes that were bitter against them. Bitter against them, because in their existence they kept alive that power of Rome, that great conquering force of civilisation that Pict and Scot and Angle together had triumphantly overthrown, as they thought, when the vast stone blocks that made the Wall toppled to the ground in hopeless ruin before their furious onslaught.

In crannogs in the marshes, in caves in the scaurs

of the Lowland rivers and by the seashore, and in rude stone forts, the Romano-Britons had to take their stand. Of the crannogs, built on piles of timber or of stone, driven deep into lakes, lochans, and mosses, we have already spoken. That these were the shelter of the Romano-Britons when Rome had 'cut the painter,' is indisputably proved by the things found in them. Fragments of red Samian ware, of native Celtic pottery, bronze weapons and household dishes, and occasionally ornaments distinctly Roman, tell us something of this unwritten piece of history.

From the Romans they had learned the value of hill forts and of military ways, and probably the forts of Selkirk, Gala Water, Roxburghshire, and of the southern slopes of the Lammermuirs date from the days of the struggle between those who had come in contact with Rome as her soldiers, and those who knew her only as their enemy. On the eastern Eildon Hill, on Duns Law, on Ruberslaw, on the Black Hill above Earlston, on the cliffs at St. Abbs — high above the churning, angry breakers—on many a 'law' and height from whence the keen eyes of warriors could sweep sea and plain for the advance of their foes, one finds forts that provide an unending subject of controversy for the earnest antiquarian. They are all of the same construction: hundreds of huts of some easily perishable material, whose very ruins

have vanished, being defended by palisaded terraces, still traceable.

Another fertile source of dispute, presumable of similar date and origin, is the Catrail, that mysterious fosse or ditch, with mounds of earth, grass-grown, on either side. For forty-eight miles it winds through the Border counties, till it is lost in the Cheviots, at Peel Fell, on the edge of Northumberland. It must have been used as a drove road by many a Border reiver in later days, but whether it was originally built as a rampart, as a military way leading from fort to fort, or as a hidden road, protected by earth-works, where the Britons and their herds could trek from one place to another, who can say? Over the Catrail Sir Walter Scott once leaped a tired horse, and thereby nearly lost his life. 'He was severely bruised and shattered; and never afterwards recovered the feeling of confidence without which there can be no pleasure in horsemanship. He often talked of this accident with a somewhat superstitious mournfulness.'

Upon the colony that Rome had abandoned Picts, Scots, and Angles pressed hard, and bravely indeed did the Romano-Britons struggle to keep their footing.

They found a leader in Ambrosius Aurelianus—'Brython of the nobility of Rome,' to quote Taliessen—who claimed descent from the last Roman Emperor

of Britain, and under him and his successors many a bloody fight was fought in the Debateable Land. In the valley of Yarrow, where the 'wan water' runs between round-shouldered green hills and lonely tracts of bracken and heather, there still remains a chronicle in stone of one of those long-past battles.

Annan Street ('The Causeway of the Mighty Heroes,' in the Cymric tongue), or Warriors' Rest, was up till a century ago a desolate moor, dotted by about twenty large cairns, supposed to be the tombs of Romano-Britons who fell in a mighty fight.

Agricultural civilisation has changed the character of the moorland. The cairns are gone, and gone, too, is the marshy lake wherein the bodies of many who fell on that bloody day are supposed to have been thrown. But a great stone still marks the place where on the moor the leaders of the battle fell and now lie at rest.

HIC MEMOR IACETI
LOIN : : : NI : : : : :
PRINC
PE : : NVDI (LIBERALI)
DVMNOGENI · HIC IACENT
IN TVMVLO DVO FILII
LIBERALI

So goes the inscription upon it. 'Here is the monument of Cetilous and Nennus, sons of Nudd, Dumnonian prince and emperor. Here lie buried the two sons of Liberalis.'

In the neighbouring ground stone coffins have been discovered, but their contents of calcined bones, bronze axes, arrow-heads, and even a broad ring of jet or cannel coal have been scattered hither and thither amongst the finders and their friends.

The shepherds who tend their hardy flocks on the lonely hills of Ettrick and Yarrow have not yet learned reverence for such relics of a bygone age, and many treasures have perished under their vandalistic hands. And yet it may be that these very peasants, long-limbed, dark-eyed, dignified of bearing, and sparing of speech, are descendants of men who bore the purple when the Roman Empire ruled the world.

*Guledig*, the equivalent for the Roman *Imperator* or *Aurelianus* (from *Gulad*, country), was the title by which the Romano-Britons hailed their ruler.

And a mighty Imperator was the Guledig Arthur, who has come down to us through the years, bathed in the misty golden light of Romance, wearing a crown of more or less mythical perfections; worthy hero for a poet of poets.

The close of the fifth century dates his coming; a warrior, some say, of the blood royal, while others maintain that he owed nothing to his birth, but carved his way upwards by his own fearless arm and mighty sword.

To the rescue of British and Romano-British, who

were in sore straits, Arthur came to the Border, fought with and defeated, in a succession of twelve battles, Scots and Picts, Angles and Saxons.

In Ayrshire he fought first, at a river mouth, of the identity of which we cannot be certain. Once he fought in Lanarkshire, four times at Loch Lomond, once at Carron in Stirlingshire, and then marched southwards, avoiding the almost impregnable Pictish stronghold of Edinburgh, to fight again in 'the Wood of Caledon.'

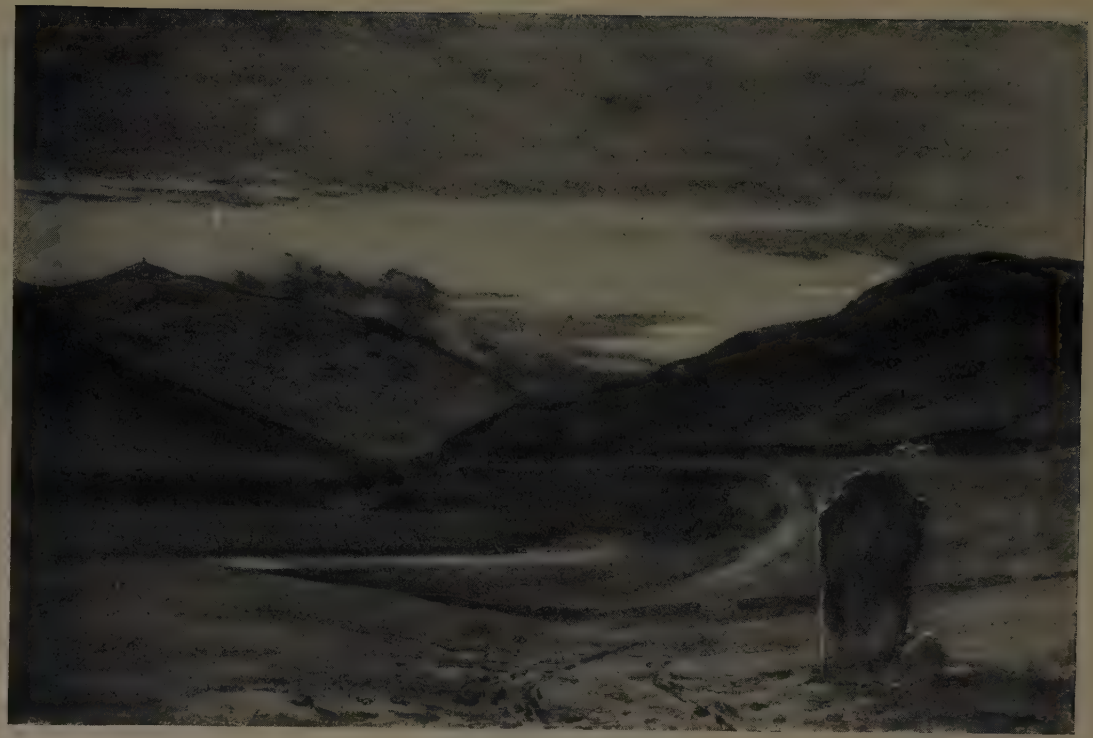
A thousand years later, when the retinue of James IV. came to that 'derke forest,' they 'thought it awesome for to see.' A few old trees, gnarled and deformed by age and the storms of centuries, dotted here and there in Ettrick and Yarrow, in the old Deer Park of Holydene near St. Boswells, and in one or two other places on the Border, yet stand, like grey ghosts of the great trees of the Forest of Ettrick, still enduring the hurricanes of autumn and the snows of winter. But, each year, the ghosts grow fewer, and soon the place that knew the Wood of Caledon, whose dense timber stretched from near Carlisle to the Pentland Hills, will know it no more.

A victory gained *in silvâ Caledonis*, and Arthur marched onward to strike a blow at the Angles who occupied a tract of land between the Northern Wall and the valley of the Gala. The old Roman road, running from the Carron in Stirlingshire to

Biggar Water, helped him in his march towards the Tweed.

On the hill at Cademuir (in Cymric *Cadmore*, 'the great battle'), on Manor Water, the Angles met him and forced him to give battle. Even now the line of march is traceable. Near Falkirk we still have the mysterious cromlech called 'Arthur's O'on,' and two miles below the place where tradition has placed the grave of Merlin there stood, until Sir Walter Scott's father, a too zealous factor, had it pulled down for building purposes, yet another 'Arthur's Oven.' It was an almost perfect cromlech, two large upright stones being crowned by a third huge one, and above it, on the green hill of the Lour, the ruins of a prehistoric fortress of great size showed where Arthur may have encamped the night before the battle.

A short day's march from Cademuir, probably across the Caersman, up Glentress, and by the Deuchar Water, past what is now known as the Piper's Grave, brought King Arthur to his eighth battle. Between the waters of the Heriot and the Lugate the victory was won. It was a fight between Pagan Saxon and Romano-Briton, who had grafted Christianity on to the pagan faith of Roman culture, the mystical faith of British Nature worship, and magnificently were the heathen routed. Into battle, so says the historian Nennius, 'Arthur bore upon his shoulders'



THE WARRIORS' REST

(? his shield) 'the image of Saint Mary, perpetual Virgin, and the Pagans were put to flight on that day, and there was a great slaughter of them through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Saint Mary, His Virgin Mother.' Others tell us that he bore not only on his shield the picture of the Madonna, but carried a cross he had brought from Jerusalem.

Till darkness fell, we are told, the pursuit and the slaughter went on, and from thenceforth, to Saxon and to Angle, that vale of Gala Water was known as a *Vallis Doloris*,—Wedale, the dale of Woe.

For it is not when life is light-hearted that it leaves its mark. It is the dark things, the tragedies of life that are remembered—where those foemen fought — where that man's blood stained the heather.

In later days, so we are told, at the Church of St. Mary of 'the Stow in Wedale,' there were still 'preserved in great veneration' the fragments of that miraculous image of the Holy Virgin which was held to have wrought death and disaster upon the heathen host. Dumbarton, Stirling, and Edinburgh afterwards fell before King Arthur, and through him peace at length came upon the land, for all the wild races feared the power of his arm.

For twenty years and more the peace continued, and then treachery from within brought the end. His nephew Modred, lustful for power, rose in

insurrection. The districts that Arthur had wrested from the Saxons he had given to three brothers, Urien, Arawn, and Llew. To Llew was given Lodoneis, the Lothians of that day, and Modred his son leagued himself with Arthur's false queen, the Guinevere of Tennyson—the 'Ganore,' 'Vanora,' or 'Wander,' of Scottish tradition—and with Saxon, Angle, Pict, and traitor Briton. Either at Camelon near Falkirk, the unbeautiful factory town whose only claim to poetry now lies in its name, or by the 'Western Sea'—near the Solway, it may be—King Arthur suffered dire defeat and was slain in battle.

'Thus they faughte alle the longe day and neuver stynted tyl the noble knyghtes were layed to the colde erthe,' writes Sir Thoma Malory, '& euver they faught styll tyl it was nere night & by that tyme was there an hondred thousand layed deed vpon the down.'

As the historical facts of his life grew more remote, romance and myth took hands and together wove for posterity tales of the fame of King Arthur, and of how he passed away.

It was not possible for his followers to think of their hero, their saviour, as dead. No one knew where he was buried.

'A mystery to the world,' writes an old bard, 'is the grave of Arthur.'

And Malory writes—'Yet somme men say in many

partyes of England that Kyng Arthur is not deed. But had by the wylle of our lord Jhesu into another place, and men say that he shal come ageyn and he shal wynne the holy crorse. I wyl not say it shal be so, but rather I wyl say here in this world he chaunged his lyf, but many men say that there is wryten vpon his tombe this vers. *Hic iacet Arthurus Rex, quondam Rex que futurus.*'

In later years, what says one who might fitly have descended from Galahad of the Table Round ?—

> '"But now farewell" he said,
> "I am going a long way
> With these thou seëst—if indeed I go—
> (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
> To the island-valley of Avilion;
> Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadow'd, happy fair with orchard-lawns
> And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
> Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."'

Between the Lammermuirs and the Cheviot Hills where the Tweed, like a silvery snake, winds through wood and valley, stand the three hills that tradition has chosen as monument for a hero who can claim rank with the immortals.

Underneath the Eildons, the Trimontium of the Romans, they say that King Arthur lies asleep. Around him sleep his knights of the Round Table, their armour on, their horses ready harnessed, slumbering in their stalls. By them hangs a bugle,

and should there ever come a day of direst need to the descendants of the Romano-Britons, the Scottish Borderers, and should there then be found a man who is stout enough of heart to blow on that horn a mighty blast, King Arthur and his knights will awake and once more draw their swords for their country's sake. But the man who blows the peal must do so 'with summons strong and high'; must

> 'Bid the charmed sleep of ages fly;
> Roll the long sound through Eildon's caverns vast,
> While each dark warrior kindles at the blast;
> The horn, the falchion grasp with mighty hand,
> And peal proud Arthur's march from Fairyland.'

Throughout the years when Arthur was fighting and winning battles, the Frisians and Angles and Saxons, so the old historian tells us, were constantly seeking help from their Fatherland. The castle at Berwick-on-Tweed—'Joyous Garde' after Lancelot's day, 'Dolorous Garde' before he won it—must have suffered constant change of hands even in those early times. For constantly these hordes from Germania were reinforced by large-limbed, yellow-haired sea-rovers like themselves, who came to settle in the lands whose inhabitants they ravished and murdered by way of introduction. Constantly were they reinforced by ready-made kings and knights. The bulk of the rulers in those early days might have been labelled 'Made in Germany.' Kings sailed

across the stormy North Sea and ruled the wayward hordes, until, in 547, the scattered tribes of Angles and Frisians were gathered into the realm of Bernicia. Durham, Northumberland, part of Roxburgh, Berwick, East Lothian, and part of Midlothian were included in the kingdom over which reigned a mighty king, Ida by name, who boasted of having a direct descent from Woden, the god of war.

At Bamborough we can still see where he placed his stronghold.

The sand lies, on sunny days, in a long yellow line along the shore, with gentle wavelets creaming, frothy white, on the edge of a limpid blue sea. Above the beach are sandhills and benty blue grass, and on the turfy knolls above are pungent-scented tansy, with here and there a sea-pink, a harebell, or an appealing little heartsease of violet and yellow. And behind sea and sand and grassy dunes and flowery turf stands the Castle of Bamborough, erect, dignified, splendid, on the sudden cliff, from which, looking eastward, we see only water and waves, waves and water, as far as eye can reach, and from which we can survey each undulation of the purple plain that lies stretched before us for many and many a mile to the south.

When gales buffet the wintry sea, when the keen nor'-easter howls round the Castle walls, when the tatters of surf scud across the sea-bitten grass like

little white birds in a storm, the Castle of Bamborough is almost at its best. Beyond it lie the jagged islands where many a ship has perished. On the rocks beneath it the hungry waves lash and break themselves in tumultuous fragments. With no sheltering tree, no protecting cliff, it stands arrogantly erect to face the tempest. And underneath its rock, nestling at its feet, lie the little cottages whose lamps burn bright at night, and whose owners in past days have many and many a time sought sanctuary of their overlord, on the cliff high above them.

There, first within a hedge, and afterwards protected by a wall, Ida planted his standard. And to this day there is no part of the land more truly English, no county where the tongue of the Angles survives in its purity quite as well as it does in that grand county of Northumberland, whose eastern border wages unceasing war with the greedy billows of the fierce North Sea.

Dinguardi or Dinguoaroy was the British name for Bamborough. Bebba, Queen of Aethelfrid, Ida's grandson, gave its later title of Bebbanburh.

For twelve years Ida reigned. He was succeeded by Ella, who was of a different family, and who added to Bernicia the districts between the Humber and the Tees, termed Deira, thus forming one kingdom of Northumbria. The province of Bernicia, however,

remained under the rule of Ida's sons, of whom twelve survived him, and six of whom reigned in succession in the royal city by the sea.

Theodoric, the 'Flame-Bearer' of the bards, was a worthy son of Ida, and against him fought stoutly a new champion for the Britons, who had arisen when Arthur had gone to sleep a deep sleep under the Eildon Hills, with the silver Tweed murmuring in his drowsy ears a monotonous lullaby.

Urbgen, the City-Born, the Urien of the bards, gave themes for many a song to the Cymric poets:—

'If there is a cry on the hill,
Is it not Urien that terrifies?
If there is a cry in the valley,
Is it not Urien that pierces?
If there is a cry in the mountain,
Is it not Urien that conquers?
If there is a cry in the slope,
Is it not Urien that wounds?'

Of noble victories over the Flame-Bearer also sang the bards:—

'There was many a corpse.
The ravens were red from the warring of men,
And the common people hurried with the tidings.'

Of a triumphant raid, apparently, Taliessen speaks when he says:—

'A rumour has come to me from Calchvynd (Kelso),
A disgrace in the south country, a praiseworthy pillage.'

Loathsome to Briton and to Romano-Briton were those fierce fighters from Jutland and Friesland and

from the Rhine. Not only their own lives and those of their wives and children were threatened, but their homes, their religion, and the right of inheritance to that part of the northern land that they had now come to claim as their own.

> 'The North has been poisoned by rovers
> Of a livid, hateful line and form,'

writes a Celtic bard, probably brown-haired, and with dark eyes, mystery-loving, full of poetry. Those big-limbed, blue-eyed blondes who fought and drank and slept off the effect of their potions, who paid no heed to aught on earth save the living, actual facts before them of meat and drink and lust and war, have left an indelible mark on the British nation of to-day. For much we owe them our thanks, but thanks, too, we owe to the people who fell before them, those with whom matter was ruled by mind, and to whom prose ranked less high than poetry.

Saxons slaughtered Britons, and went home to eat and drink and sleep and fight again. Britons defeated Saxons, and sang of

> 'A Saxon, shivering, trembling,
> With hair white-washed . . .
> With bloody face . . .
> . . . A bier his destiny.'

The old tales of descent from the men of Troy are not so very hard to believe when we read songs that have so strong a kinship with those that tell us how Hector

fought and died, and of the slaying of the wooers by Odysseus.

For something like four hundred years the struggle between Briton and Saxon went on, but disunion among the Britons led to the end. As the years passed, the Britons divided into two parties: the Christian party, to whom most of the Romano-Britons belonged, and the Pagans, those who had apostatised from the teaching of the early saints and reverted to Druidical and Roman Paganism, or who had taken to themselves the strange gods of the Norse invaders and those who had never known Christianity.

In 573, near the junction of the Border Esk and the Liddel, close to the magnificent hill fort known as the Moat of Liddel, Christian and Pagan met in terrible conflict. The Pass of Ardderyd, leading from the Wall into Scotland, was the scene of a triumphant victory over the so-called 'heathen,' and long did the bards mourn over the heroes who fell on that day.

> 'Seven thrusting spears, seven riversful
> Of the blood of chieftains will they fill.
> Seven-score generous ones have gone to the shades—
> In the wood of Calydon they came to their end.'

Thirty years later the Pagans had their revenge. Aidan the Scot, consecrated first independent King of Dalriada—the south-west Borderland—at Iona by Saint Columba, was now leader of the Christian party. Many a mighty fight against Picts and

Saxons had Aidan won ere he led the Christian host into battle against the Pagan Scots and Britons who had leagued together against him. In 596 he was victor in the great battle of Chirchind in the country lying between the Stirlingshire Carron and the Pentlands, where four of his sons were slain. In the life of St. Columba we are told how to the people at Iona in the western sea there came the news of this far fight.

Said the Saint 'to his minister, Diormit, "*Ring the bell.*" The brethren, startled at the sound, proceeded quickly to the church, with the holy prelate himself at their head. There he began, on bended knees, to say to them, "*Let us pray now earnestly to the Lord for this people and King Aidan, for they are engaging in battle at this moment.*" Then after a short time he went out of the oratory, and looking up to heaven, said, "*The barbarians are fleeing now, and to Aidan is given the victory—a sad one though it be.*" And the blessed man in his prophecy declared the number of the slain in Aidan's army to be three hundred and three men.'

Against Aedelfrid of Bernicia, in 603, Aidan advanced with his army. Through the lonely passes of Liddesdale he led his men; it may have been down the Catrail, which crosses the upper part of the Liddel valley.

'They shot him dead at the Ninestanerig,
Beside the Headless Cross,'

says Surtees in his forged ballad, and he has chosen for Sir Barthram's resting-place the scene of one of the mightiest fights ever fought between Pagan and Christian upon British soil.

At Degastane, now Dawstane, where the remains of the Catrail are still seen, between Dawstaneburn and Dawstanerig, the opposing armies met, and that of Aidan was cut in pieces. Opposite Dawstane stand the Nine Stones that give the 'Rig' its name. On a farm some miles lower down the valley is an enormous cairn, with a large stone standing erect near it, and at Milnholm, on the Liddel, is the 'headless cross.' Traces these, we are told, of the last conflict between the Christian Scots and Romano-Britons and 'the heathen of the Northern Sea.' And 'on the moor and moss,' like Sir Barthram, by the lonely burn, lie asleep, till the battle of Armageddon shall have been fought, Christian followers of Arthur the King, and Pagan Norsemen who sought no better end than to pass to Valhalla sword in hand.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SAINTS ON THE BORDER

> Ring out the darkness of the land,
> Ring in the Christ that is to be.
>
> TENNYSON.

To many a strange sound had those lonely hills and rivers of the Border listened during the years since the Romans first came. The buzz and hum of life on the great Wall had done away with their solitude. The clash and clang of battle had rent the air. They had echoed the cries of the human sacrifices that fell before the knives of the high priest Druids. They had heard the lowing of the bull that died in the temple of Mithras.

And now yet another sound, strange and sweet and new, came to them, for across the moors rang the little bronze handbell of Christian priests, calling on men to pray. Of many a new god had the Britons heard from the Roman conquerors. The god of whom, last of all, they were taught, was that One who in the earlier years was worshipped only in secret. This was no radiant Apollo, no mighty force demanding satiation in the blood of bulls, in mystic rites,

horrible or magnificent. A carpenter of Galilee, who had suffered a shameful death after having given to men a religion of love and of peace, must have seemed to them strangest of all strange gods for a nation of soldiers to worship.

When Hadrian built the Wall, the teaching of St. Paul was still comparatively fresh in the minds of the Romans in whose city he and many another follower of the despised Nazarene had suffered martyrdom, and there were Christians among the Roman legionaries. Had not even Tiberius Cæsar, who wore the purple when Christ was crucified, demanded in the face of an opposing senate that Jesus of Nazareth should be admitted among the gods of Rome (*inter cetera sacra*), because he was convinced that the Messiah of the Jews was not man but God?

It was not, however, until 324 A.D. that Christianity became the State religion throughout the Roman Empire, a religion to be imposed by Rome upon all her provinces, as a part of the national constitution. It is a system that the nations of to-day have not yet laid aside. Even now there are those who feel it a national privilege to Christianise foreign races by force of arms. But, to be just, it was not only the irresistible moral persuasion of the Roman sword that taught the Border folk the doctrine of 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men.' While barbarians from the east and the west were harrying the Romano-

British provinces, a Christian bishop came from Rome to preach the Gospel to the Picts of Galloway.

Ninian, a Romano-Briton, had been trained in Rome in all the doctrines of the Western Church. Along the shores of the Solway, in the 'land of bog-myrtle and peat,' he carried on his missionary work, and at Whithern, on the west side of Wigton Bay, he built a church and dedicated it to St. Martin of Tours. *Candida Casa*, the Church of White Stone, was its name among the country people, to whom a stone house was a curiosity almost unknown. A few miles from Whithern—now Whitehorn—in a steep rock by the sea is 'St. Ninian's Cave.' There, so legend tells us, where only the dash of waves could disturb him, the saint was wont to go for prayer and contemplation. The Celtic crosses discovered not long since on the rocky walls would make it seem that legend has not erred.

Tradition tells us but little of this early saint, who is perhaps better known to Scottish people as St. Ringan, and through whose teaching the Southern Picts gave up their idols and received the true faith. It would seem that he was a saint who cared for gardens—for, at a moment's notice, tradition says, he made the plot of ground which supplied him and his brethren with vegetables produce a handsome crop of onions. 'A wonderful thing,' says the chronicler, 'and credible only by such as believe that

nothing is impossible to the faithful.' And among the country folk it is not for his good works, but in connection with cottage gardens, that St. Ninian's name is perpetuated. The old Scottish woman who still treasures as a part of her Sabbath observance the picking of a piece of 'Apple ringie' to carry to church in her Bible, is unconsciously commemorating a saint of the fourth century. For 'Apel Ringie' means, in Cymric, the herb of St. Ninian's Church; while its other name of 'Saithrinwuid' (*i.e.* 'Suthrenwud') is Saint Rin's wood—that is to say, the wood, or herb of St. Ninian.

One wonders whether the deep ravine, clad with hazel and hawthorn bushes, down which a burn trickles at Holydene, in Roxburghshire—once an important seat of the Kers of Cessford—and known as Ringan's Dene, may not also be a reminder of a visit paid by St. Ninian to the Romano-Britons of the Border. Hence, perhaps, '*Holy* Dene.' The various legends of St. Paul, St. James, and St. Peter first bringing the Gospel to Britain are not much more improbable than are the tales of the missionaries who preached the Gospel in Scotland during the century that followed the founding of St. Ninian's white church by the sea.

Then, in 563, the religious history of Scotland ceased to consist merely of nebulous tradition.

At Iona one is shown a raised grassy ridge, the

shape of an upturned boat, and called 'An Curach,' the Coracle. Were tradition infallible, An Curach would be a noteworthy shrine, for in the coracle, in 563, Columba is said to have come from Ireland, and then to have buried that boat above the beach that he might avoid the temptation of returning.

'In those days the Saint, with twelve disciples, his fellow soldiers, sailed across to Britain,' writes his biographer. Not only missionary and saint was Columba, but soldier, statesman, and maker of nations. He was of the blood of the royal Scots of Ireland, eligible for the sovereignty of his own country, and kinsman of the kings of Dalriada. In Ireland he was a notable man, a warrior, an experienced ecclesiastic who had founded many monasteries, but at the age of forty-two he left the honours of his own land and sailed across the sea 'to seek a foreign country for the love of Christ.' Iona, called then the island of Hii, was the home that St. Columba chose for himself and his followers. 'He lived a soldier of Christ during thirty-four years in an island,' writes Adamnan, his contemporary and biographer.

From that rocky island in the Western Sea, Columba's clear gaze saw the needs of the peoples that time and a common enemy had not yet forged into the amalgam that we now know as the Scottish nation. From them he took their Pagan beliefs,

giving in their place the Gospel of Christ as he himself knew it. The use of Pagan customs that were not in themselves contrary to the Christian faith was not forbidden by the Christian Church, and the miraculous element of religion, so indispensable to those who had known the mysteries of the Druids, was fostered by St. Columba. In every way the soldier-saint was able to outdo the Druid miracle-workers. The powers of clairvoyance and of telepathy certainly seem to have been his, and he used ' a book of glass ' for crystal-gazing.

Having given to them the simple creed in which he and his warrior-monks—his *milites Christi*—lived and died, St. Columba took it upon himself to choose for the people of his great diocese that stretched from Iona down to the Cheviots, the kings that should rule them. On his advice, his kinsman, Aidan, was given the crown of the Dalriadic Scots, and the soundness of his choice was proved by the fact that on Aidan's death, after a reign of thirty-seven years, he left Dalriada a compact kingdom instead of a chaos of turbulent tribes.

Of St. Columba's greatness of intellect, of his magnificent strength and force of character, there can be no doubt, and it is pleasant to read the old tales that show us that with it all he had the simple, tender heart of a little child.

To one of the brethren he foretold the coming of

a crane, a migrant from his own dear homeland. Battered, bruised, and driven about by contrary winds the bird would come, he said, and lie down exhausted on the beach at the feet of the waiting monk. 'Treat the bird tenderly,' said the saint. 'Take it to some neighbouring house, where it may be kindly received, and carefully nursed and fed by thee for three days and three nights. When the crane is refreshed with the three days' rest, and is unwilling to abide any longer with us, it shall fly back with renewed strength to the pleasant part of Scotia [Ireland] from which it originally hath come. This bird do I consign to thee with special care because it cometh from our native place.'

And so it fell out, and the monk who had tended one of the smallest of God's creatures for the love of God and of his master, received the blessing of St. Columba, while, one calm day, the crane 'marking for a little its path through the air homewards, directed its course across the sea to Hibernia, straight as it could fly.'

The story of the saint's last days and of his death, as told by Adamnan, is one of the most beautiful pieces of biography in any language. To the end he cared for the temporal wants of the brethren who lived in the wattled huts by the sea. Too feeble to walk, he was taken in a cart to visit some of those who were at work at the far side of the island. He

went to bless the barn, and though it was near at hand he had to rest, worn out, by the wayside on his return. And as he rested 'There came up to him a white pack-horse, the same that used, as a willing servant, to carry the milk-vessels from the cowshed to the monastery.' Nuzzling its head into his breast it whinnied piteously and tears ran from its eyes. Diormit, Columba's faithful attendant, would have driven it away, but Columba forbade him. 'Let it alone, as it is so fond of me,' he said. 'Let it pour out its bitter grief into my bosom. Lo! thou, as thou art a man, and hast a rational soul, canst know nothing of my departure hence, except what I myself have just told you; but to this brute beast, devoid of reason, the Creator Himself hath evidently in some way made it known that its master is going to leave it.'

Later on in the day St. Columba laboured at his daily task of transcribing the Psalter. But his tired body sought its rest, and the hand that had so unweariedly worked in the service of God and of man was worn out at last. At the end of the verse, 'They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing,' he stopped. 'Here,' said he, 'at the end of the page, I must stop; and what follows let Baithene write.' When evening fell he went to the nocturnal vigils in the church, and then, returning to his hut and lying on the bare flagstone that was his bed,

with a stone for his pillow, he gave his valedictory address to the brethren: 'Be at peace, and have unfeigned charity among yourselves.'

As the bell tolled midnight he rose and hastened to the church, going so quickly that he reached it before any of the others. Diormit followed him, and 'feeling his way in the darkness, as the brethren had not yet brought in the lights, he found the saint lying before the altar; and raising him up a little, he sat down beside him, and laid his holy head on his bosom. Meanwhile the rest of the monks ran in hastily in a body with their lights, and, beholding their dying Father, burst into lamentations. And the saint, as we have been told by some who were present, even before his soul departed, opened wide his eyes and looked round him from side to side, with a countenance full of wonderful joy and gladness, no doubt seeing the holy angels coming to meet him. Diormit then raised the holy right hand of the saint, that he might bless the assembled monks. And the venerable father moved his hand at the same time, as well as he was able—that as he could not in words while his soul was departing, he might at least, by the motion of his hand, be seen to bless his brethren. And having given them his holy benediction in this way, he immediately breathed his last. His face still remained ruddy and brightened in a wonderful way from the heavenly vision, so that he had the

appearance not so much of one dead as of one that sleepeth.'

It would be almost impossible to overestimate the influence of St. Columba upon the country of his adoption. Many of the peoples of Scotland who had lapsed back from the Roman teaching into Druidical or Norse Paganism were won back to Christianity by him and by his followers. And his influence was no transient thing. For many a day to come, those who held rule north of the Border were influenced by the teaching of him who might himself have been a king.

Contemporary with St. Columba, yet another saint was working amongst the heathen of North Britain.

Of St. Kentigern, unfortunately, we have no authentic biography such as that for which we owe Adamnan so big a debt. In his case legend seems more than a first cousin to fairy tale, and there are many variants of the story of his birth. According to one of these, Loth, King of the Lothians, son of King Arthur's enemy Modred, 'a man half pagan,' had a daughter named Thenew. Thenew became a Christian and refused to marry the heathen prince chosen for her by her father. On being given her choice between marriage and being handed over to the care of a swineherd, she chose the latter. The swineherd, who was secretly a Christian, treated the

princess well, but in those East Lothian woods where the swineherd's flocks revelled amongst acorns and beech mast, her noble suitor found Thenew and revenged himself on her for her scorn. Great then was the rage of King Loth against his outraged daughter. The 'man half pagan' had no mercy, and commanded that the laws of Lothian should be fulfilled and Thenew stoned to death. But she was of the blood royal, and no one dared cast a stone. Up the steep side of Dunpender Law—now Traprain—they dragged the princess, and from the top of a crag they hurled her down. She reached the bottom unhurt, and King Loth, in great amazement, decreed that she should be cast upon the mercy of the sea. 'If she be worthy of life, her God will free her from the peril of death, if He so will,' said he. So, to where the waters of the Firth of Forth lap on the seaweed-covered rocks of Aberlady Bay, they took the hapless princess. In a coracle they set her adrift—merciless man behind her, before her sky and waves, and the mercy of the God whom the heathen did not know. Into the deep water, right out past the Isle of May, drifted that little boat of hides. Darkness came down, and still it rose and fell on the waves that lapped against its side. At dawn the tide carried it in on to the sands at Culross, a few miles from the mouth of the river Forth. Some herds had had a fire on the beach

the day before, and to its ashes the princess wearily dragged herself. As she lay there, a sudden gust of wind scattered some sparks that still smouldered, and the wood blazed merrily once again. Beside the fire thus providentially lighted, her baby was born—sky his covering, sand his first bed, little waves crooning his earliest lullaby. Some herds found the mother and child, and while some of them fed her, others hastened to Culross to tell the saint who lived there of their strange find.

'Thanks be to God,' said St. Servanus, 'for he shall be my dear one.'

'For,' says the chronicler, 'as the child was being born, while the saint was in his oratory after morning lauds, he had heard on high the *Gloria in excelsis* being solemnly sung.'

So did the outcast princess and her son find sanctuary. The child was christened Kentigern, trained by Servanus, and so beloved in the monastery that he was known as Mungo, from the Cymric *Mwyn Cu*, 'my dear one.'

On reaching manhood Kentigern travelled westward, and at Molendinar Burn, at a hamlet called Cathures, he founded a monastery. No visible trace of it remains, and it is hard to sift out what is fact and what is mere monkish fancy in the life of this Scottish saint. But at Glasgow, the city that stands where Cathures once was, St. Mungo's patron saint-

ship remains secure, while Thenew is said to have her name perpetuated, if transmogrified, by St. Enoch's railway station. Surely a terrifying monument, could she but return, for one who braved winds and waves and the cruelty of men, but was spared the din, the roar, and nerve-torturing rush of a railway station of the twentieth century.

Monks of later days tell us how St. Kentigern clothed himself. Next his skin came a rough garment, then a second of goat's hair, above which was an upper garment such as fishermen wore. Over this came a white alb, with a stole about his neck. He carried a pastoral staff without any gold or jewelled adornment, simply the plain wooden crook of a shepherd of sheep.

A rough flock must Kentigern have had to herd. In the remote regions where the Druids still held their sway he carried on his labours. For eight years he was at Lochquharret, now Borthwick, near the head of the Tyne. In the wood of Caledon, and presumably at Tweedsmuir, he taught, and it may be that it was a cross of his erecting that gave its name to the famous old wayside inn by the side of the Tweed —the Crook Inn.

His name is associated with a prayer that was prayed with fervour by the Scottish Borderers in the fifteenth century. A plague that was slaying in England threatened Scotland with invasion, and

the English declared its first ravages on the Scottish side to be the visitation of God, sent by His grace to call the Borderers to repentance. With, perhaps, less humility than venom, did the Scottish Borderers 'pit up' the prayer: 'Gode and Saint Mungo, Saint Ronayn, and Saint Andrew, schield us this day fro Gode's grace, and the foul death that Englishmen dien on.'

In Strathclyde St. Kentigern suffered persecution, and had to flee for refuge to the Christian Britons in North Wales. There he founded St. Asaph's monastery, and did much good work, and in 573, after the great victory of the Christians at Ardderyd, he was recalled to Scotland by Rhydderch Hael, the Christian king and victor.

At Hoddam in Dumfriesshire he and the 665 monks who came with him from Wales were met by King Rhydderch and his people, and there St. Kentigern delivered to the folk of his northern see an episcopal address. From it, if only we may accept it as simple verity and not as unauthenticated tradition or as the composition of a monk of later days with an over-fertile imagination, we can learn what was the creed of the Christian who lived in the Lowlands of Scotland more than thirteen hundred years ago.

Said Kentigern 'that idols were dumb, the vain inventions of men, fitter for the fire than for worship.' 'The elements,' he said, in which they believed as

deities, were 'creatures and formations adapted by the disposition of their Maker to the use, help, and assistance of men.' But Woden, whom they, and especially the Angles, believed to be the chief deity, from whom they derived their origin, and to whom the fourth day of the week is dedicated, was, he asserted, 'in all probability a mortal man, King of the Saxons, by faith a Pagan.'

At his monastery of Glasghu, by the then clear stream of the Molendinar Burn, Kentigern met with Columba. And at Glasghu, the apostle of Strathclyde, old and full of years, died and was buried. 'Without doubt,' as one writes, 'the saint is historically the cause of Glasgow, and all the commerce that now rolls through that mighty mart.'

Kentigern was dead, Columba was dead, Aidan, Christian King of the Scots, fought for them no more, and Aedelfrid his conqueror had also died, when Columba's influence began to be felt on the Border more than it had ever been before. Eadwine, Christian King of Deira, sponsor for the city of Edinburgh, was slain in battle in 633. Osuald, a son of Aedelfrid, the Pagan king whom Eadwine had conquered, had fled for sanctuary to Iona. There he was baptized by St. Columba and by him taught his simple doctrine of faith and peace and love.

When Osuald succeeded, on Eadwine's death, to the throne of Deira, one of his first acts as king was to

send to the little island in the Western Sea, where he had learned all the good that he knew, and to ask for a holy man to come and teach his unruly subjects.

To him came Cormac, but Cormac's mission was a failure. He returned to Iona with a report that the Border folk were 'stubborn and untameable barbarians.' To his tale of the hopelessness of the mission the brethren listened, sad at heart. But one of them, Aidan, knew the charity which 'hopeth all things.' When the speaker had come to the end of his doleful story, Aidan arose.

'It seems to me, my brother,' he said, 'you have been too hard upon these ignorant people; you have not, according to apostolic counsel, offered them first the milk of gentle doctrine, to bring them by degrees, while nourishing them with the divine word, to the true understanding and practice of the more advanced precepts.'

A few days later Aidan was consecrated Bishop of Northumbria, and with a few monks in his train set off for the long journey from Iona to Bebbanburh.

Near Bamborough, at Lindisfarne, or the Holy Isle, he placed his see; preferring to more stately sites inland the little rocky, wind-swept island, where the salt spray scourges the benty blue grass on the sand dunes, and where the sea-birds' mournful clamour is merged into the boom and thunder of the waves.

Bede tells us that soon after the installation of the

new bishop 'churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked to hear the Word; possessions and lands were given of the King's bounty to build monasteries; the younger Angles were by their Scottish masters instructed.' 'It was a beautiful spectacle,' he says, 'when the Bishop was preaching, and was not quite understood, from his imperfect English, and the King, who had learned Scotch in his exile, acted as his interpreter.' And further he says that Aidan 'received twelve boys of the Anglic nation to be instructed in Christ.' One of these lads, Cedde, became Bishop of Mercia, and we know him now as St. Chad, patron saint of Lichfield, while Eata was successively Abbot of Mailros and Bishop of Lindisfarne. In English Northumbria and in the regions that we now know as 'the Borders,' Aidan's labours were crowned with such success that during Osuald's reign the kingdom of Northumbria was won from Paganism to Christianity. In the reign of Osuald's successor the work went on, and Aidan, who did not cease to be a humble, simple monk when he became a powerful pontiff, carried the Gospel into the wild regions of the Cheviots and of Tweeddale.

There is a story of how Oswin, King of Deira, bestowed on his bishop a fine horse with handsome trappings, a fit mount for a prelate. As Aidan, riding this kingly gift, went on one of his episcopal journeys, a poor man met him and sought an alms.

Straightway the bishop dismounted and handed over the horse to the man who was poorer than himself.

'What meanest thou, Lord Bishop?' the angry king demanded. 'Were there not poorer horses, or other less costly gifts to bestow upon a beggar?'

To him Aidan made reply—'What sayest thou, king? Is yon son of a mare more precious in thy sight than yon son of God?'

Then, the historian tells us, the king pondered the bishop's words, and before he sat down to dine he fell on his knees and asked pardon.

'No more shall I speak of it,' he said, 'and never more regret anything of mine that thou givest to the children of God.'

Many monasteries were founded by Aidan, one of the most notable being that of Coldingham in Berwickshire. It was a double monastery, with a community of monks and another of nuns, and from its first abbess, Aebba, half-sister of Osuald, St. Abbs takes its name.

From the bleak coast of Berwickshire Aidan pursued his missionary labours into the more opulent district that is now known as Roxburgh. Where trees still richly clothe the banks of the Tweed, he founded the monastery of Mailros—from *maol ros*, the naked headland in the wood.

Three or four miles from the Melrose of to-day, with the Eildons almost overshadowing it on the west,

and the red scaurs of Bemersyde rising up eastwards across the river, the names of Old Melrose and of the Monks' Ford are all that are left to tell us of what was once the most important monastery between Iona and Lindisfarne. Eata, one of the Saxon lads who had been trained by St. Aidan, was one of its abbots, and it was during his rule that Cuthbert, greatest of the Border saints, came to claim his saintship.

There is the usual perplexingly contradictory number of legends of Cuthbert's birth, but it seems most probable that he was born at the hamlet of Wrangholm, a village whose site is now marked by a few rugged old ash-trees, not far from Smailholm Tower. There he was near enough Mailros to see the monks as they started on their dangerous journeys amongst the heathen in the hill-country of the Wood of Caledon, to listen to many a tale of their saintliness and heroism, and sometimes to hear the tinkle of their bell and the music of their chanting borne across the river to the wooded heights above. The sight of men tonsured from ear to ear, wearing white tunics and coarse cloaks of undyed wool, and armed only with a pilgrim's staff and by the invisible power of an almighty God, setting forth on perilous journeys amongst heathen people who most probably would bestow upon them the blessings of martyrdom, must have fired the imagination and stirred the zeal of an intelligent and

spiritually minded boy. Even as a child, we are told, he strove to imitate the monks of Mailros, praying and keeping vigil in the night-time. 'He took delight in mirth and clamour,' and excelled even his elders in running, wrestling, jumping, and all manly sports. 'Because he was agile by nature, and of a quick mind, he often prevailed in boyish contests; and frequently when the rest were tired, he alone would hold out, and look triumphantly around to see if any remained to contend with him for victory.' It was while he was amusing himself with other boys, with the light-hearted folly of their age, that Cuthbert's first call came.

According to his ingenuous biographer, a little boy of three came and begged him not to be so foolish, and Cuthbert answered him jestingly. In a passion of tears the child threw himself on the ground, and to Cuthbert, who vainly strove to comfort him, sobbingly said :—

'Wherefore dost thou, the holy Cuthbert, elder and bishop, thus contravene thy nature and high calling? It becomes not thee, whom the Lord hath appointed to instruct in virtue thine elders, to be thus playing among babes!'

Cuthbert's heedless days were over when his second call came. He was a shepherd lad, learning to know God from Nature as well as from the lives of the holy monks. In those times there were wolves and other

prowling wild beasts against which flocks had to be guarded, and the laws of property had not yet become so sacred that a shepherd could pass the night unarmed, fearless of human enemies.

On the heights above where the Leader joins the Tweed, Cuthbert and his fellows, like other shepherds of old, watched their flocks by night. And to Cuthbert, as to the men of Bethlehem, there came a vision of angels. From the hillside he could look down on the thick forest whose trees whispered echoes of the million nameless sounds of the silent night, and hear, far below him, the murmur and plash of the river. Miles down the valley, on the other side, hidden in the woods, was the monastery, where monks held their vigils. And while the other shepherds slept, Cuthbert up on the hillside also kept vigil, and spent the midnight hours in prayer. Many miles away, across trackless bog and forest, at the Holy Island on the eastern coast, St. Aidan lay that night a-dying. And as Aidan's spirit passed away, a wonderful vision formed itself before the eyes of the shepherd boy on the heights of the Leader. Through the darkness of the sky broke a long shaft of light, and down the glorious path angels descended, received amongst them ' a spirit of surpassing brightness,' and with him speedily winged their way heavenwards. In prayer and exaltation Cuthbert spent the remainder of the night, and when, next day, he heard that

St. Aidan had died at the time of his vision, he gave his flocks into the care of their owners and set out for Mailros. He was aware that at Lindisfarne there were many saintly men, but 'the great reputation of Boisil, a monk and priest of surpassing merit,' drew him to the monastery he had known from his childhood. When he had forded the Tweed and reached the Abbey, he leaped from his horse, handed his spear to an attendant, and was about to enter the church to pray. At the door stood Boisil, the prior. Straightway, to those who were with him, he said—'Behold a servant of the Lord!' and welcomed Cuthbert with gladness. To him Cuthbert told the story of the past night, and that he had come to enlist himself as a soldier and servant of Christ. A few days later, when Eata visited the monastery, Cuthbert received the tonsure and was enrolled among the brethren.

Under the care of the good St. Boisil, his religious education speedily progressed. The St. Boswells of to-day is a reminder to the Border folk of the 'man of great sanctity and of a prophetic spirit' who was Prior of Mailros, and the old name of St. Boswells also claims, in local tradition, to have connection with the minor saint. For, in 664, Prior Boisil was cut off by the Yellow Plague, a great pestilence that was then raging, and when the old people of the district still refer to St. Boswells as 'Allessudden,' there are

those who would have us believe that Boisil's death, 'all-o'-a-sudden,' is responsible for the title. Another of the saintly monks of Old Mailros has left his name to a well-known Border village. The picturesque little straggling street of white houses that suns itself on the southern slope of the Eildons, and which owns a view that the world might envy, was apparently a mission station of Bothan the monk. Whether or not he is responsible for the rude stone cross that still marks the centre of the village, who can say? But, obviously, it was St. Bothan who gave to Bowden with its dene—its thick wood and its winding burn—the old name of the dene of St. Bothan—*Bothandene*—just as he acted as sponsor to the parish of Gifford in East Lothian, once known as Bothans.

From the day he joined the monastery, St. Cuthbert worked indeed as a worthy member of the Milites Christi. As in his boyhood, he was a wrestler and a fighter, but he wrestled now with 'spiritual wickedness and with the rulers of darkness.' Even as he had excelled in sport, he now excelled his fellow-monks in all the self-denials and austerities of the monastic life. 'In reading, working, watching, and praying, he fairly outdid them all.' That he was 'of a robust frame, unimpaired strength, and fit for any labour which he might be disposed to take in hand,' Bede also tells us. And a phenomenal physique he must certainly have possessed in order to withstand

all the rigours to which he now subjected himself. When the woods of the Tweed were leafless, the brown reeds frosted white, and the water, of steel and ebony, almost icebound, Cuthbert would go at nightfall to the river, and, wading into the stream, would stand there, chanting the Psalms, until the yellow morning light called him back to the Abbey. So did he strive to mortify the flesh, to extinguish the fires of passion.

His novitiate over, Cuthbert's work as evangelist was carried on with the same magnificent zeal and whole-heartedness which had always characterised him. Aidan did not know the speech of the Borderers, and required an interpreter. Cuthbert was himself a Borderer, and knew both the tongue and the character of his people. With splendid enthusiasm he carried on his mission work. Sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, he went from village to village. His fiery zeal, his simple, boundless belief in the faith he preached, his fine oratory, and his own powerful, magnetic personality, were irresistible compelling forces, and the heathen of the Border hills were by him won over to Christianity. For weeks at a time he would be away from the monastery, 'frequenting most those places, preaching most in those villages which lay far in the high and rugged mountains, which others feared to visit, and which by their poverty and barbarism repelled the approach of teachers.' To

the wilds of Tweedsmuir he penetrated, and founded Chapel Kingledoors, by a lonely mountain burn. To the shores of the Solway—where Kirkcudbright (the Kirk of Cuthbert) bears his name—to the Forth, and even as far as Strath Tay, his love for the souls of men led him. For a short time the scene of his labours and form of his work were changed, for as hospitaller, or guest-master, he went with Abbot Eata and some of the brethren to a monastery at Ripon. There, we are told, he entertained an angel unawares, and a miracle ensued. There had always been a difference between the form of tonsure and the date of holding Easter in the Roman and Celtic Churches, and controversy between those whose religion came from Ireland, *via* Iona, and those who had got it direct from Rome, had more than once waxed hot. Now that the Celtic Church had found a footing so far south, the Roman party felt that serious steps must be taken, and ecclesiastical jealousy quickly drove out Eata and his monks and sent them north again.

In 664 the Yellow Plague brought many extra labours to Cuthbert. He himself was smitten, but his iron constitution carried him safely through, and, when Prior Boisil died, he was made Prior of Mailros in his stead. The coming of the pestilence had shaken the faith of the Borderers, whose Christianity was of such very recent growth. Looking upon the plague as vengeance from their discarded gods, they quickly

lapsed from the new religion and sought safety in the use of charms and of amulets, and of all the pagan rites, in the efficacy of which they had once believed. But Cuthbert, still weak and haggard, and bearing in his body traces, which he never lost, of his terrible illness, fought those lapses of faith as he had fought the plague. The people of Northumberland, of Tweeddale, of Merse and Teviotdale, of 'the Wood of Caledon,'—the half-savage people in the hill country, the rough fisher-folk of the eastern coast, had to listen again to his compelling oratory, and put away in penitence their reinstated gods. For, says Bede, 'he had such an angelic countenance that none dared to conceal from him the secrets of their hearts.'

It was while he was Prior of Mailros that he went to visit St. Aebba, Abbess of Coldingham, in her monastery up on the cliffs, above the nesting sea-birds' dolorous clamour, and the crash and boom of the North Sea billows.

While others slept, St. Cuthbert would leave the monastery and go by the rocky path to the shore, only returning in time for morning prayer. A spying monk, curious to know how the saint spent the dark hours, one night followed him. Down the cliffs, where, in spring, orchises and primroses star the rough short grass, strode St. Cuthbert, to the stony beach where the tide laps over brown, seaweed-covered rocks, and waves that are never gentle break against rugged

boulders that have seen many and many a wreck. And still onward he strode, until the icy water was breast high, and there halted. All through the night, until the chilly dawn, the monk could hear St. Cuthbert's voice raised in praise to God. All through the night the chanting of the Psalms rose above the wash and moan of the waves. Then, when the first pale golden streaks showed where grey sky ended and grey sea began, St. Cuthbert waded ashore, and the monk saw two otters follow him, tenderly rub themselves against his wet feet, and dry them with their fur.

'A ridiculous monkish legend,' says the enlightened reader of to-day. Yet are we not too apt to dismiss the tales of the saints and of the animals which served them as mere pieces of foolish embroidery?

> 'He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small.'

And if the saints—more especially the hermit saints—made friends of the wild creatures, is it any more wonderful than what is done in our own day by the man who is deeply skilled in woodcraft, and who does not wish to kill but to understand? The human being who could, hour after hour, remain stiff and motionless, who took no apparent notice of the living things around him, and who was always gentle, always merciful, must unconsciously have tamed the

creatures that soon learned to have no fear of him. Undoubtedly, too, there are men who have over animals a magnetic power which is denied to the common run, and it may be that to St. Cuthbert, once a shepherd lad wise in woodcraft, this power was known. On one of his journeyings it was an eagle that ministered to him and to the boy who went with him to serve the Mass. They had no food left, but the eagle gave up to them the fish he had just caught, and the boy eagerly seized it.

'Is our fisherman to be allowed no share?' asked the saint. So the fish was cut in two, and the eagle had his lawful half.

In 664, at a Synod at Whitby, King Oswin decreed that the Roman form of tonsure and date of Easter were those that were to have the royal support, and the Columban clergy left Northumbria in a body.

Eata and Cuthbert were men much too large in mind and soul to be swayed by questions of form and custom or embittered by party spirit. The souls of men meant more to them than any form of tonsure, and so they conformed to the Roman rule.

In the same year Cuthbert was made Prior of Lindisfarne, and left the woods by the silvery Tweed for the flat, sandy, treeless reach of Holy Island in the grey North Sea.

At Lindisfarne he found dissension, some of the monks being stubborn in their belief that where

tonsure and Easter were concerned, Rome was utterly wrong. 'Rome errs, Alexandria errs: all the world errs; only the Scoti and Britones are in the right.' Such was their belief,—in matters of Church government a spirit that seems to have survived in a most lively manner from the days when a priest prided himself on being 'nae Roman, but a Culdee.'

It required infinite tact and most infinite patience to handle these recalcitrant brethren, but both of these qualities St. Cuthbert possessed in marked degree. No sneer used by an angry disputant could sting him into a hot or discourteous retort. When the atmosphere grew too tropical for the growth of brotherly love, St. Cuthbert would close the discussion, always with the same calmness of mien and 'placidity of countenance' that made his historians marvel. Next day when devotional exercises and sleep had calmed the angry passions of the opposing monks, he would recapitulate his arguments, until, 'by the modest power of his patience,' he won them over to his own point of view. On those outside the monastery his influence was equally strong. He who was to himself so harsh, was always just, but always infinitely tender and merciful, to others. 'No one went away from him without consolation; no one took back with him the sorrow of mind that he had brought.'

For twelve years he laboured as Prior of Lindisfarne. And if it be the case that 'Holiness is an infinite

compassion for others; that greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them; that happiness is a great love and much serving,' then to Holiness, Greatness, and Happiness did St. Cuthbert most surely attain.

Yet, in the path towards holiness, he felt that much still lay before him. At the age of thirty-nine he gave up the monastic life and sought peace for his soul on one of the Farne Islands that we can see lying beyond Lindisfarne, purple black, far out among the waves.

It is still a favourite haunt of the sea-birds, that rise with shrieks of deafening discord from their nests on the rocks, when boats go near the island, but in the saint's day it was reputed to be haunted not only by sea-birds but by evil spirits. Soon, however, so the ingenuously recording monks tell us, St. Cuthbert drove out the devils, and tamed the screaming gulls, that spared his little harvest of barley at his words of mild command. The eider ducks which nest on the Farne Islands bear the name of 'St. Cuthbert's ducks' to this day. With his own hands Cuthbert built for himself a little hut of stones and turf, thatching it with dried grass, with a partition between tiny oratory and tinier living-room. In the best of weather St. Cuthbert's island is a wind-swept, storm-beaten, barren rock; but, when gales blow, it is the plaything of the waves

which break against it, driving their drenching spray and tufts of salt foam from east and north, for the breakers on west and south to meet and fling back again yet more furiously. A hut of turf was fair prey for the tempests, and soon the walls had many a crevice through which the winter winds could blow chill and shrewd. When St. Cuthbert's island knew him no more, the hermit monk who succeeded him nailed a calf-skin on to the inner wall to keep out wind and wet, so many holes were there. But St. Cuthbert, who had no thought for any such luxury, stopped the chinks as best he could with mud and wisps of hay. For nine years he lived the life of an anchorite, far from the disputes of men. But a prophecy made by his early master, St. Boisil, as he lay dying, had yet to be fulfilled.

'Thou shalt be bishop' he had said to the young monk, and from the cares and responsibilities that the pontifical post demanded Cuthbert had always shrunk. To the see of Lindisfarne he was called by Ecgfrid, King of Northumbria.

A deputation waited on him and returned with the tidings that the saint would not be persuaded to leave his cell. Then the king himself, with an escort of nobles and Church dignitaries, and with many of the brethren from Lindisfarne, sailed over to the Farnes. On their knees they besought Cuthbert to come, and Ecgfrid's entreaties and tears prevailed. Before his consecration at York, Cuthbert revisited

Mailros. Many a strange path had he trod since his little playfellow prophesied his future greatness at the village on the heights above the Tweed.

Pride of place had never been known to Cuthbert, and as bishop he worked with even greater humility and more unsparing devotion than he had done in the days before his hermit life. Angles and Picts, Scots, Saxons, and Britons he ministered to, for, as of old, no place was too remote, no people too barbarous to be sought out by him. In time of plague he laboured as might have done the humblest novice who sought for sanctity.

'Is there any one here to whom we have not yet ministered?' he would ask his chaplain when they had visited a plague-stricken village. 'Or have we now seen all the sick here, and shall we go elsewhere?'

The sword was brighter than ever, but the scabbard was growing worn. St. Cuthbert felt that the end was not far off, and so asked to be relieved from his episcopal duties and allowed to return to his hut by the sea. He made a farewell visitation of his diocese, admonishing and consoling all the faithful, and on Christmas Day 686 A.D. he said farewell to the brethren and returned to Farne. As he entered the boat that was to take him there, the monks crowded around him.

'Tell us, Lord Bishop,' asked one, 'when we may hope for your return?'

'When you shall bring my body back here,' replied Cuthbert.

For two months only, the two cruellest months of the year on that bleak coast, St. Cuthbert lived in the retreat that he loved. The brethren visited him as often as might be, but sometimes, for days together, storms would prevent them from crossing to the island. Once, after a five days' absence, they found him lying in the little hospice he had built for them by the landing-stage, too weak and ill to move. They asked him what he had had for food as he lay helpless and untended. He showed them five onions, one of them partly eaten. 'This,' he said contentedly, 'has been my food for five days, for whenever my mouth became dry and parched with thirst, I cooled and refreshed myself by tasting these.'

Very shortly afterwards the end came. Lying on the floor of his little oratory, opposite the altar, he gave his last messages to the monks of Lindisfarne. He asked that his body might be rolled in a linen sheet that St. Aebba had given to him. 'Bury me by the Cross,' he said, referring to the wooden cross he had erected near the hut. 'I would fain rest here where I have fought my humble fight for the Lord.' But even in that he was content to give up his own will and consent to their wish that he might lie at Lindisfarne.

When they asked him for his valedictory commands,

he spoke to them of humility and of peace. 'Keep peace,' he said, 'one with another, and have divine charity ever amongst you.' All through a wakeful night he prayed, and having very early received the Eucharist he raised up his folded hands in prayer and gently passed away.

The monks at Lindisfarne were chanting matins when, on a high rock on the Farne, two little lights sprang up. The monk who watched for the signal knew that it was one of the brethren on Cuthbert's island, with a candle in either hand. He ran to the church and broke the news that Cuthbert, saint and bishop, at the age of fifty years, had gone forth that dark winter morning on his last journey into the unknown.

Many miracles were attributed during his lifetime to the saint. After his death, the usual fabric of miraculous legend was woven round his name. His body produced marvellous cures; sailors who prayed to him in storms were brought by him—his crozier used as a rudder!—safely to land. Small wonder that the body of the saint was the most precious of the relics possessed by the Northumbrian Church. When, in 793, the Danes descended on Lindisfarne, the monks who fled before them carried with them the body of St. Cuthbert. For seven years they bore it from place to place, hunted men, hiding in forest or on wild moorland—over the Border to Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumberland, and to many another county, leaving

traces of their journeyings in churches and in crosses bearing the saint's name. At Mailros, for a little, the body found peace, and in *Marmion* we are given the legend of how it reached its final resting-place at Durham :—

> 'O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
> From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
> Seven years St. Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
> They rested them in fair Melrose;
> But though, alive, he loved it well,
> Not there his relics might repose;
> For, wondrous tale to tell!
> In his stone coffin forth he rides,
> A ponderous bark for river tides,
> Yet light as gossamer it glides
> Downward to Tillmouth cell.'

Under the magnificent shelter of Durham Cathedral, 'in a fair and sumptuous shrine,' he lies. The monastery at Lindisfarne is in ruins, but he who plods across the wet sand between it and the mainland when the tide is low, may find on the shore the curious fragments of fossilised wood that are known as St. Cuthbert's beads, a sure protection against the spirits of evil.

And where the white sea-birds still swoop and scream, where the easterly gales blow and the waves thresh the shore, two lighthouses send their yellow lights from Farne across the cold North Sea. Fit monuments they for Cuthbert, whose life shone brightly in a dark age, and who guided shorewards many a storm-tossed soul.

## CHAPTER IV

### BORDER WIZARDS

They have sought him high, they have sought him low,
They have sought him over down and lea;
They have found him by the milk-white thorn
That guards the gate o' Faerie.

KIPLING.

THE old order changeth, and bitter must it ever be for him who lives on when old friends, old laws, old beliefs lie in their quickly forgotten graves.

There had been a long fight in Britain between Paganism and Christianity. Gradually the Druids of the early days had lost their footing. Gradually their old mystic religion, with its rites of mingled beauty and hideousness, had had to give way before the worship of those who knelt under the holy Cross. To the teaching of the earlier Christian missionaries they were able in part to conform. Their Pantheism was not necessarily in opposition to the simple faith of the priests who worshipped Christ as their Redeemer, but who saw God in everything.

'The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?'

But when others came—others less simple, less well versed in the teaching of Christ and His disciples, much wiser as regarded the dogmas and the forms of Church discipline and the knowledge that is attained in the cells of monasteries, and not from the study of Humanity and of Nature, the Druids' day was over indeed.

In angry protest, the old Pagan spirit of passionate revolt against the inevitable cries out in one of the songs of Taliessen, the so-called Christian :—

> 'Monks congregate like dogs in a kennel,
> From contact with their superiors they acquire knowledge. . . .
> They know not when the deep night and dawn divide,
> Nor what is the course of the wind, or who agitates it,
> In what place it dies away, or in what land it roars. . .
> I will pray to the Lord, the great supreme,
> That I be not wretched. Christ be my portion.'

We have read that at Ardderyd, in the Liddel valley, the Christians inflicted on the Pagans a terrible defeat. It was fitting that the battle of Ardderyd should date the fall of the greatest of the Druids. Unhappily for him, Merlin was not one of the 'seven score generous ones' who, in the Wood of Caledon, joined the shades. A harder fate was his. For many a long day and longer night had Merlin to dree his weird in the Wood of Caledon, broken in heart, half-crazed, enduring the anguish of those who, yet living, fall into the pit of Fortune's Wheel.

The Merlin who has been handed down to us by tradition is barely mortal. He is the terrifying magician of fairy tale, half man, half spirit—the enchanter Merlin that Tennyson has given to the world—the fearful, uncomprehended power of evil that makes the hearts of children beat fast as they pass through the woods when evening shadows are lengthening; the half-believed-in force that gives a horror to the sough of the wind in lonely places when night falls.

But the real Merlin, as far as one is able to grasp him, was, in all probability, the last of the Druids. A bard he undoubtedly was, for he has left his record in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*; and he was also, presumably, a priest. And with these mighty weapons of religion and of song in his hands he tried to guide the fate of nations. It would seem as though he had urged the Pagan leader of the host at Ardderyd to go forth to battle. It was to be a glorious victory. Once again the Druids were to be lords of all the land, the new gods of the peoples that they hated were to be cast away. But instead of victory came dire defeat. The king was slain; slain, too, was Merlin's nephew, the son of the sister that he so dearly loved—she who was so fair that her name meant 'The Dawn.' From the battlefield fled Merlin, his punishment the fact that he still lived. On, on, on he went, through the dark woods that covered hill and moorland, the

moan of the Border rivers telling him only of death, bloody death, shameful defeat and disaster, of horrors for which he must have held himself to blame.

'Death takes all away, why does he not visit me?' was his bitter cry.

Little wonder that people came to fear the man who was mad with shame, remorse, and grief. For fifty years Merlin lived on, feared by the folk of those wilds of Upper Tweeddale, on whose moors the snow in winter lies deep, and where the burns that rise on the lonely hills can still sing the songs of solitude. Hazel, birch, and rowan clothed the hillsides then, but it was by another tree that blossomed for him when his life and his happiness were at their springtide that Merlin's memory was haunted.

'Sweet apple-tree that grows by the river!
Whereof the keeper shall not thrive on the fruit.
Before madness came on me, I used to be round its stem
With a fair, playful maid, matchless in beauty.
Ten years and forty, the sport of the lawless,
Among spirits of darkness have I wandered.

. . . . . .

In the battle of Ardderyd, golden were my torques,
Though now I am despised by her who is of the colour of swans.

. . . . . .

Sweet apple-tree that grows in the glen.'

The Christian victor at Arderydd had appointed St. Kentigern his bishop, and in his journeyings in the Wood of Caledon, where the Tweed flows past

Drummelzier, Kentigern and Merlin met—the apostle of the new faith and the priest of the old.

The saint was kneeling in prayer when there stood before him a figure that he might well have taken as a messenger from the Evil One. Gaunt, haggard, a soul in Purgatory looking through his eyes, 'with hair growing so grime, fearful to see,' Merlin confronted the man whom he hated.

'Who are ye? and whence do ye come?' boldly asked the saint.

To him answered Merlin: 'Once was I the prophet of a king, Merlin my name. Now am I in solitude enduring privations . . . for I was the cause of the slaughter of all those who fell in the battle of Arderyd.'

But no solace could Kentigern give to the soul that sought rest, and soon the wild figure was lost again in the shadow of the woods.

The end came at last. And, if tradition does not err, it came with all the cruel brutality that was the one thing awanting to fill the Druid poet's heart with furious horror, shame, and agony. Meldred, Lord of Drummelzier, had many shepherds who feared Merlin as a sorcerer who might work evil on them and on their flocks. Fear brought hatred, and with stones and clubs they did him to death, then cast him, a stake driven through his body, into the Tweed.

'Depuis l'antique Orphée jusqu'à l'Orphée celtique,

combien d'autres sont morts de même! C'est la lutte éternelle de la force brutale contre l'intelligence douce et sublime inspirée du ciel, dont le royaume n'est pas de ce monde.' So says the Vicomte de la Villemarqué.

On the bank of the Powsail Burn, the stream of the willows, near Drummelzier, a green mound is pointed out as marking Merlin's grave; an aged thorn his only monument, the murmur of water his dirge. And surely the Powsail Burn ought still to echo across the ages the moans of the broken heart of him who was once the guide of kings.

One of the prophecies attributed to Merlin was delivered shortly before the Border herds had shamefully put him to a shameful death.

'The flesh upon me shall be rotten before a month shall have passed,' he said, 'but my spirit will not be wanting to all those who come to me here.'

And still the spirit of poetry, the passion for the beauties and mysteries of Nature, must surely haunt those who love the lonely lochs, the rivers, and the streams of what was once the Wood of Caledon.

A prophecy dating back one knows not how far, has the grave of Merlin for its subject:—

> 'When Tweed and Pausyl join at Merlin's grave,
> Scotland and England shall one monarch have.'

And, on the day that James VI. was crowned, Tweed, in spate, overflowed her banks, and merged

her waters with the Powsail as it coursed past the Wizard's thorn.

It is a far cry from the days of Merlin the Bard to those of the next Borderer who won for himself the title of 'Wizard.'

More than five hundred years had come and gone. Northumbria's greatness had waxed and waned. Across the cold North Sea had come more of the stormy petrels of history, bringing into an already turbulent land, harassed by wars between Picts and Scots, Angles and Britons and Romano-Britons, a new element of dispeace and of bloodshed. Up the rivers and firths of the eastern coast stole the black-prowed craft of Danish pirates. They were men who seemed to possess few of the virtues of the 'Winged Hats.' Mere packs of savage Scandinavian wolves were they; bloodthirsty buccaneers, seeking at first, not the conquest of new lands, but lusting only for plunder, murder, and rapine. As time went on, they came in larger numbers, until in 793, so writes Simeon of Durham, 'the Pagans of the north came with a naval armament to Britain, like stinging hornets, and overran the country in all directions, tearing and killing not only sheep and oxen, but priests and Levites, and choirs of monks and nuns. They came to the church at Lindisfarne and laid all waste with dreadful havoc, trod with unhallowed feet the holy places, dug up the altars, and carried off the treasures of

the holy church. Some of the brethren they killed, some they carried off in chains, many they cast out naked and loaded with insults, and some they drowned in the sea.'

Not for long did the Danes arrive in flying squadrons of two or three, bent merely on plunder, greedy sea-birds to be beaten off by the peoples of the land. Under their flags, that bore the black raven—ominous of their own spirit, their greed for prey—they swarmed into the country in compact hosts. And Northumbria, weakened by anarchy and rebellion, could not long withstand the assaults of the Northmen who came not merely to harry the hamlets on the fringe of Northumberland, Berwick, and the Lothians, but to settle on the land of those that they slew. Settle they did, and to this day one fancies that traces of the fearlessness, the lawlessness, and other of the characteristics of the followers of Eric of the Bloody Axe—significant title!—and men of his kind, are to be seen in the fisher-folk who now populate the rocky line of coast that was once so often harried by the pirates of the North Sea.

For one century after another the Border country was the fighting ground of Danes, Scots, Picts, and Britons. Kings and kinglets rose and fell, fought and died, the while these fiercely antagonistic peoples were being merged into the Scottish nation. It was not until 1057 that Malcolm Ceannmore began his

reign as king over all Scotland, not until then that the Scottish nation found itself.

While Edward the Confessor, Harold, William the Conqueror, and William Rufus followed each other on the southern throne in rapid succession, Malcolm Ceannmore, a Scoto-Pict, reigned in Scotland. 'Ceannmore,' or Great-Head, he was called by his Celtic subjects, and a great head indeed was that of Malcolm. Like James I. in later days, he spent years of his youth at the English Court, and during his residence as an exile at the Court of Edward the Confessor he was able to see for himself the weak spots in the constitution and the defence of his own land. That it was of enormous importance that what are now the southern counties of Scotland should belong to the king who reigned as far north as the bleak shores of Caithness and not to him who also owned the white cliffs of Kent, was a fact that he lost no time in acting upon. His marriage with the beautiful and saintly Saxon princess Margaret materially strengthened his position, for the Saxons were with him. Only once did he go on a punitive expedition amongst his turbulent subjects of the north. All his energies were concentrated in gaining for his crown an extension of frontier, in driving the English far south of the Tweed. As far south as York, as far west as Carlisle, the land claimed by the conqueror was constantly raided. The castles of Carlisle, Durham,

Newcastle, and Norham were built as checks for him in the big game of chess that he played with William I. of England. Many a luckless pawn was brought to Scotland in those days. Says Simeon of Durham, writing in 1070: 'Scotland was therefore filled with slaves and handmaids of the English race, so that even to this day, I do not say no little village, but even no cottage can be found without them.'

'Camerlach' was the name given by the Borderers to these prisoners of war who were made bondmen, from their constant mournful wailing as they laboured in the fields.

When he died in 1093, Ceannmore had the proud record not only of being unconquered by the Norman conqueror, but of having so successfully carried out his design for the welfare of his kingdom, that its boundaries of Tweed, Cheviots, and Solway were practically what they remain to this day. One can but hope that death, that came on a great king by treachery, was too swiftly his for him to realise that his men were about to be cut in pieces, or to flee in panic before an English host.

Battle, murder, and sudden death characterised the reigns of the six kings who followed Malcolm Ceannmore. The fluctuating fortunes of the Scottish monarchs had enabled the rulers of England to do much in stocking the Border with the Norman nobles whose descendants have not yet entirely given place

to the families of successful exponents of modern British commerce.

With the Normans came monastic orders, bringing education for the Border youth. Schools sprang up; the abbeys supplied teachers trained in foreign lands. The young Borderer was now not only taught to handle a horse and a sword as soon as he could walk; book-learning was also given to him.

William the Lion was king, when one born on the Border attained such knowledge that men feared him for it, and gave to Michael Scot the title of 'Wizard.'

Of his birthplace there are the usual discrepant accounts, but that he was not a Scot of Balwearie in Fife is evident from the fact that the Balwearie family did not come into existence until a later date. In all probability he was born somewhere in Upper Tweeddale—the district of Merlin—which was the cradle of the Scot family. Presumably his first school was the famous grammar school at Roxburgh, from whence he went to the Cathedral School at Durham, thence to Oxford. From Oxford, athirst for knowledge, he went on to Paris, winning there the distinction of being called 'Mathematicus' and 'The Master.' At Paris he took Holy Orders, for custom commanded that the man who in those days sought for wisdom must seek it in the garb of a monk. A knowledge of law was then esteemed a most valuable asset for those in orders, so to the famous law school

at Bologna went Michael Scot, already a master of mathematics and theology. His scholarship brought the young Borderer into high places. Far from the lochs and moors and the uncertain skies of his own land, we find him in the year 1200 where the sun smiles kindly on the orange and lemon groves and on the blue sea of Palermo, tutor to Prince Frederick, grandson of Barbarossa, and afterwards the Emperor Frederick II. His pupil was later known as 'The Wonder of the World.' 'In thought and learning,' writes a great historian, 'he was far above the age in which he lived.' How much, one wonders, did Frederick owe to the man who taught him, and who composed for his pupil's use a handbook on astronomy and a treatise on physiognomy? The latter marked the termination, for the time being, of Scot's connection with Sicily, for it was a wedding present to the young king, and with the wedding his tutorial duties came to an end. His years in Sicily had not been any more barren for him than for his pupil. He had learned Arabic and Greek in the island where even now we are able to bridge over the centuries and look on Moors as swarthy, on Greeks as classically beautiful as those whom Michael the Wizard knew. A school of translators from the Arabic existed in Toledo, and to Spain Scot therefore bent his course. To his late pupil, who had a royal menagerie, he dedicated his first translated work, an abridged edition of the

Arabic version of Aristotle's *Treatise on Animals*. The logical side of Aristotle was that which convention demanded that the student of those times should study. But convention, intellectual or otherwise, was unknown to Scot. His works show us that it was the scientific, moral, and psychological sides of Aristotle—the sides unknown to other western students—that attracted him. Averroës of Cordova, another Arab sage, whose works were held to be full of speculations so daringly heterodox that Moslems persecuted him and Christians denounced him, naturally drew to him this seeker after knowledge. In his spare time from the study of alchemy, astronomy, and of medicine, Scot the savant made a translation of the works of Averroës. The translation was promptly censured by the Church, and for his participation in the unhallowed knowledge of his friend and preceptor, Frederick was more than once excommunicated. In those days the Moors ranked as the most learned and most cultured people in Europe. To them we owe our modern system of arithmetic, and from them we learned the elements of astronomy and of chemistry. The wise men then nearly all came from the east, and from his residence in Spain Scot learned much. As Court physician and astrologer, he returned to Palermo, and either the power of his royal master or of his own learning led the Pope, Honorius III., to overlook his excursions into realms regarded as unholy

by Mother Church, and himself to ask the English Primate, Stephen Langton, to give the soothsayer of the Sicilian Court a British archbishopric. To the archbishopric of Cashel was Michael the Wizard elected, but on conscientious scruples he declined to act. One is interested to find that the 'scruples' were his lack of knowledge of the Irish tongue—good Border Scots, French, Latin, Greek, Arabic, and probably a fair smattering of other languages being a useless quantity in dealing with the wild men of Cashel. It was not long after his ecclesiastical preferment that, so we are told, to Michael Scot 'the veil of the future seemed to be lifted,' and this intellectual Saul was also found amongst the prophets. That he fell into a melancholy about the time that this occurred is not to be marvelled at if the list of calamities handed down to us as his prophecies is correct.

'Woe to thee, Mantua!' he cries—'Woe to thee, Mantua, filled with so great grief!' Did he, indeed, lift the veil and see Mantua the Magnificent as it now is?—a melancholy wreck of past greatness, a haunting city, the grey miasma that rises from the reedy swamp beside it clinging round the mould-stained survivors of palaces with the depressing chill of something long dead.

The downfall of Rome he also foretold, the passing away of the glories of Florence.

In 1230 he came to Scotland, and the Border

legends of him evidently take their date from then. His reputation had preceded him. He had meddled with the dark arts. He had sold his soul to the Devil.

To him, in his native Borderland, came the Evil One, to claim what was his own. But three works, the Wizard had stipulated, must be done at his bidding ere he went to pay his bond. First of all, a cauld must be made across the swift-flowing Tweed, and the cauld at Kelso Mill yet withstands the winter floods. Secondly, the Eildon Hill must be rent into three. And in three peaks it stands, 'Eildon's triple height,' a monument to the powers of darkness. Last of all was Satan sent to weave ropes of the sea-sand, and the shifting sands of Tweedmouth show now with what conscientiousness the Devil still seeks to fulfil his part of an unsanctified bargain.

Other legends, dear to the rustic mind, tell us of the demon horse 'Auld Michael' used to ride; and Oakwood Tower, the peel tower up Ettrick that still belongs to a Scott—Lord Polwarth, head of the clan—has a tale of its own regarding Michael Scot, whose home it is said to have been.

When Scot came to live at Oakwood, so the story goes, he heard much of the fame of a witch who lived at Falsehope, on the other side of the Ettrick Water. Wishing to test her powers, he rode one day to Falsehope, and leaving his horse and greyhounds in charge

of his servant entered her house. The woman denied the possession of any supernatural power and would answer none of the questions put to her. But as Michael rose to go she snatched up his 'wand,' which he had imprudently laid on the table, and struck him with it. In a moment his form had changed, and when a hare crossed the threshold, his servant, a true Border sportsman, slipped the hounds on it without hesitation. A desperate course did Michael run, till at length he found sanctuary under his own Tower of Oakwood, and was there able to reverse the spell and resume his own form.

Autumn came round, and the witch's trick was still unavenged. But one day in harvest Michael rode with his dogs to a brae above Falsehope, and sent his servant to ask the witch for some food for them. The woman was baking bannocks for the harvesters and angrily told the messenger to be gone. Then, according to his master's orders, the man stuck over the door a paper inscribed with cabalistic signs, and with the couplet—

'Maister Michael Scot's man
Sought meat and gat nane.'

No sooner was the paper posted than the magic began to work. Round and round the room danced the witch, incessantly chanting the rhyme—

'Maister Michael Scot's man
Sought meat and gat nane.'

But the spell did not stop at the witch. The dinner-hour came, and the farmer sent one of his men to the house to fetch food. The messenger caught the infection—a hysterical form of ' magic ' not unknown amongst the ' Shakers ' of to-day—straightway began to chant and joined the dance. A like fate overtook the next messenger, and the next, and the next, until the house was full of bewitched dancers. The farmer came himself, last of all, and hearing the noisy chant and clatter of dancing feet, ' keeked ' in at the window, canny man, so as to run no unnecessary risks. The rhyme told him the name of the warlock who was responsible, and he went hot-foot to Oakwood and besought Michael Scot to reverse the spell.

' Go home to your house,' said the Wizard, ' enter it backwards, and with your left hand take the paper from over the door.'

So was the spell removed from Falsehope (correctly *Fauldshope*, the glen of the sheepfolds) and its witch-wife, whose fame is still preserved by the summit near the farm, which is known as the Witchie Hill.

The story of the manner of Scot's death is another generally accepted legend. He had seen so far into the future, says tradition, that he knew that his end was to come by the falling of a stone. For his protection he made for himself a light helmet, but at Mass one day, as the Host was elevated and the

sacring bell rang, Michael raised his helmet, and a stone in the roof of the church, loosened by the bell's clang, fell and killed him on the spot.

What was in reality the cause, which the place of his death, who can say ? but his grave in the transept of Melrose Abbey has been made famous by another Scott, the Wizard of later days.

Cruel are the pangs of the Purgatory dealt by Dante to Michael Scot. He is one of those who walk through a dark valley, in silence weeping. And because in the body he and his fellows have tried to pierce the dark curtain of futurity, to attain to knowledge too great for man, their heads in Purgatory are turned backwards; they can only look at what is past. But of a surety, Michael Scot, a man who lived so many centuries before his time, must even on earth have endured a Purgatory. He who had given his life to the pursuit of knowledge, who had striven to master the sciences after which, even now, though centuries have passed away, we are only dimly groping; he who was one of the most learned men of his age, was looked on with cold suspicion and hostility by fellow scientists like Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus. By the unlearned world, by his own mother-country, which might have welcomed him as a most distinguished and worthy son, he was received as an evil magician, feared and hated as a leaguer with the powers of darkness. Truly 'in much wisdom is

OAKWOOD TOWER

much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.'

To the thirteenth century Michael Scot belonged, and to the same century belongs yet another Border seer. Merlin the Druid and Scot the Astrologer have been handed down to us with superstitious terrors surrounding their very names. Thomas the Rhymer has met with a more kindly fate at the hands of tradition. A mysterious prophet he may be, yet he comes to us with all the grace and glamour of the prince of fairy tale; a wonder-worker because he is a worthy knight, fit to grace the court of the Fairy Queen.

When the Border country, from Cheviots to Lammermuirs, was still mainly dense forest of oak and pine, rich in game, the Earl of Dunbar had a hunting seat at Ercildoune. The sleepy little village of Earlston, by the side of the Leader, with the volcanic-looking Black Hill towering above it, now shows no trace of the castle of the Earl. But there may yet be seen, at the west end of the village, as one goes on one's way towards the Eildons and the Tweed, an ivy-covered fragment of a ruined tower. There once dwelt Thomas Learmonth of Ercildoune, known as the Rhymer, to whom the Earl of Dunbar was friend as well as feudal lord.

In those days the Border was rich in abbeys. The little hamlet of Ercildoune was within easy hail of the Austin Canons at Jedburgh, the Tironensian

monks at Kelso, the White Canons at Dryburgh, and the Cistercians, who at their beautiful abbey of Melrose had practically taken the place of the colony of monks from Iona, with their wooden huts, at the Old Melrose that is now no more. Old Melrose was then nearly moribund, but it is in a charter relating to it, of which the date is probably 1260-1270, that we find the name of Thomas the Rhymer. A Haig of Bemersyde had rashly agreed to pay to the Chapel of St. Cuthbert at Old Melrose an annual fee of ten salmon —'five fresh, and five old'; but apparently the fishing that season was poor, or the other riparian proprietors of the district so unfriendly that salmon-fishing was too violently exciting a sport for one of the house of Haig. Were there no welcome rains, no spates to bring the fish 'up the water'? For the flowers were evidently rich and plentiful, and the bees had done their duty in supplying Petrus de Haga with a sufficiency of the then highly negotiable commodity of wax. To pay the salmon, says de Haga in this remarkable document, would 'tend to the disinheritance of him and his heirs,' but 'half a stone of wax, good and saleable,' he was willing to pay, and to the document 'Thomas Rimor of Ercildun' subscribed himself as a witness.

That Thomas of Ercildoune was a poet, his title of 'Rimor' shows, although the romance of *Sir Tristrem* is still only doubtfully acknowledged to be his work.

It is not as a poet, however, but as a prophet, that his fame has come down to us through the centuries, and how his gift of prophecy came to him legend tells us in a ballad that must ever have for its readers a fairy charm :—

'True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e;
And there he saw a ladye bright
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett o' her horse's mane,
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.'

The 'Eildon Tree' is known no longer, but a big stone marks the spot where Thomas lay, and still the burn that trickles past the foot of the hill—a favourite 'holding up' place for highwaymen in days of old—is known as 'The Bogle Burn.' But no fearsome bogle was the 'ferlie' that True Thomas saw :—

'True Thomas, he pull'd aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee,
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heav'n!
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"Oh no, oh no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belang to me;
I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

Harp and carp, Thomas," she said;
"Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunton me."
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now ye maun go wi' me," she said;
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro' weal or woe as chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed;
She 's ta'en True Thomas up behind:
And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on;
The steed gaed swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee:
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquires.

And see not ye that braid, braid road,
That lies across the lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

And see not ye that bonny road
That winds about the fernie Brae?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For if you speak word in Elflyn land
Ye 'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
And they waded through red blude to the knee;
For a' the blude that 's shed on earth,
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree—
"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that never can lee."

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas said;
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be.

I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye."
"Now hold thy peace," the lady said,
"For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
And, till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.'

Seven years did True Thomas spend in Fairyland, but

'When seven years were come and gane,
The sun blinked fair on pool and stream;
And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
Like one awakened from a dream.'

But his fairy bride had given him a right royal gift. Thomas, the Scottish courtier, had quite realised, when he remonstrated, how awkward it might be for him had he for evermore to live in a palace of Truth. But the 'tongue that never can lee' spoke not merely of the things of the present, but spoke with accuracy of the future. In many a part of Scotland, even as far as the Don, where Lord Byron, as a boy, feared the prophecy that the 'Auld Brig o' Don' should fall when the only son of a mother should ride across it on the only colt of a mare, his sayings are still remembered. Nor was he a mere minor prophet, predicting the petty calamities of a small district, but a seer who foretold the fate of kings. According to old chronicles, on the day before the death of King Alexander III., Thomas of Ercildoune said to the Earl of March 'That before the next day at noon, such a tempest should blow, as Scotland had not felt for many years before.' The next day came, bright and clear, and the Earl mocked Thomas as an impostor. But noon brought tidings of the sudden death of the king.

'This,' said Thomas, 'is the tempest I foretold, and so it shall prove to Scotland.'

'Quhen Alysandyr oure Kyng was dede

. . . . . .

Succour Scotland, and remede
That stad is in perplexyté.'

Many a local belief owes its origin to the Rhymer, and although the long list of his predictions, current many years after he died, are in all probability mere forgeries, he is doubtless responsible for many others that still hold good.

'At Eildon Tree if you shall be,
A brigg owre Tweed you there may see,'

said Thomas in days when no bridge crossed the Tweed at Leaderfoot. Two bridges, indeed, we now may see, and a ferlie for True Thomas would be the long-limbed red structure over which the trains to Berwick wend their way.

Best-known of all his prophecies, perhaps, is that with regard to the Haigs of Bemersyde :—

'Tyde what may betyde,
Haig shall be Haig of Bemersyde.'

Century after century has the saying held good. A Haig fought for Wallace; a successor fell at Halidon Hill, another at Otterburn. At Sauchieburn another fought; yet another was slain at Flodden; while Robert Haig, having risked his neck by taking part in many a reiving fray, fought gallantly at Ancrum Moor. Yet, as one laird died, another was always ready to step into his shoes. In the eighteenth century a Haig had twelve daughters, and the fair fame of True Thomas rocked uncertainly. But when the twelve daughters

were followed by a son, the Rhymer regained his sway as unimpeachable prophet for all the Borderland.

His prediction regarding his own line was one of sadder omen:—

> 'The hare sall kittle on my hearth stane,
> And there will never be a Laird Learmont again.'

One is inclined to wonder in what degree these prophecies influenced individuals, families, and communities? How far is it possible to assist Fate? That some of them, forged or not, gave heart to many a Scottish soldier in his fight for freedom one cannot doubt, for Scotland's ultimate triumph and power were subjects for many of them. And when we are fighting or even working for issues for which the portents seem wholly favourable, is not a successful termination already almost assured? So, also, when the omens are gloomy. Men assist their own evil fate by their own superstitious belief, when least they know it.

When and how Thomas Learmonth, the Rhymer, Laird of Ercildoune, met his death, history does not record. But legend tells us most circumstantially how the end came. True Thomas had not said farewell for ever to his queen. He was pledged to go back to her when she willed it, and once he had known the joys of the land of fairy, the realm of true love and true romance, all mundane things must

THE RHYMER'S TOWER

have seemed to him only shadows amongst which he had to pass his days of waiting until once again he could kiss those 'rosy lips, all underneath the Eildon Tree.'

He was feasting some guests at his Tower of Ercildoune, when a page ran to tell him that a hart and a hind from the forest were walking down the village street. The messengers from his queen had come, and, without a word, True Thomas rose and followed them. Up the heights behind the hamlet went the hart and the hind and he whose guides they were, until the watchers saw them vanish into the shades of the forest, and True Thomas was lost for ever to the eyes of men.

Not much more than a hundred years ago, there were rumours of his coming again. When August on the Border meant a noisy Lammas Fair at the foot of the Melrose Eildon, a jovial Cumberland horse-couper with his string of horses met with a strange adventure there. To him came a stately old man, white of hair and beard, who bought a big black horse and promised that a noble sum should be given for it if the couper met him at twelve that night at the 'Lucken Hare,' a hillock supposed to resemble a crouching hare, at the foot of the western Eildon, always a famous meeting-place for witches and warlocks. To the Lucken Hare, at midnight, accordingly went the couper, who feared nor man nor devil. The old man had kept

the tryst, but in order to get the money he said the couper must come with him farther still. Past the lonely fir wood, across the heather, from which the grouse rose with a rush and a whirr of wings, and the red fox dashed away for a safer earth, the couper followed his guide, till they stood before a rock in the hillside. Is it where parsley fern and bracken grow amongst the shingly 'clinkers'—relics of a volcanic age—that the door is to be found? or have whins and heather and blaeberry plants hidden it for ever from our too-curious eyes? It opened at the touch of the white-haired man, and the couper followed him into a vast hall where were many war-horses ready harnessed, and, by the side of each, a sleeping knight. A horn hung on the hall, and, with orders not to touch it, the guide went deeper into the cave and left the couper to watch and wonder. But 'Thou shalt not' must ever mean 'I will' to the undisciplined descendants of fighting men. No sooner had he been left by this venerable cavalry remount agent who chose his cattle at Lammas Fair, than the couper blew a mighty blast on the horn. And in the twinkling of an eye he was lying among the heather on the hillside, the stars above him, and only the crow of some startled grouse to serve as an echo of the ringing peal.

Those who believed the tale told by the couper in sober morning light, knew that he had been led to the

side of Arthur and his knights by none less than Thomas the Rhymer, unless, indeed, Merlin or Michael Scot was his guide.

In their cavern under the Eildons sleep Arthur and his knights. To find them one must be led by one who has left the light of common day for the fairy realms of poetry.

So, also, lies the Romance of our Border, not dead, but sleeping; and only those who, like Merlin and True Thomas, have the poet's clear vision, can guide others to its side. To us who blindly grope and stumble in the smoky atmosphere of everyday, twentieth-century, commonplace fact, perhaps once and again in a lifetime may be granted eyes to see the glorious vision, and a heart fearless and eager to feel the joy of it.

And if so it be, then we must thank the Fates, even if there comes a next day when we return to our horse-couping in the chill of the grey morning light.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MONKS

The sacred tapers' lights are gone,
Grey moss has clad the altar stone,
The holy image is o'erthrown,
The bell has ceased to toll,
The long-ribb'd aisles are burst and shrunk,
Departed is the pious monk,
God's blessing on his soul!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

No good that comes to any nation is without its accompanying evil, nor is there any virtue that does not own its attendant vice.

The monks brought Christianity to Scotland, and in the early days only good resulted from their teaching. Later on, by the lapse in profligacy of those who should have been holy men, the religious houses which had been loved and venerated by the country-folk, came to be hated and despised. But at first the sturdy warriors of the Border owed to the monks their knowledge of the Christian religion, and very much besides. The acquirement of the gentle arts, the acquisition of scholarly knowledge and of the refinement that comes from mental and moral dis-

cipline—in a word, that mysterious quality known as culture—came from the abbeys whose ruins still speak to us of days when men loved art for art's sake, and when the best work that artists did was all done for God's service.

While there was still little that was lovely to be found in the castles of kings or of knights, the monks had begun to beautify their houses of prayer. In 628 Bishop Biscop founded the Benedictine monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and, instead of flimsy wooden buildings, a ready prey for incendiary sea-rovers, built churches of stone. Nor was he contented with the untrained work of the Northumbrian artisans. To Gaul he sent for skilled masons and cunning workers in glass, and from Rome brought rich stores of books and paintings. No longer was the skill of the Border workman limited only to the fashioning of weapons and of armour. There were other flights beautywards for his soaring ambition. In the Northumbrian valleys many an abbey sprang up, and each abbey was a centre for art and for literature.

At Hexham, called by the Saxons 'the Town on the Holy Stream,' Bishop Wilfrid in 674 founded a church, a magnificent monument for a prelate who may possibly have had *au fond* a little desire for his own aggrandisement, as well as a great desire for the glory of God. Little of the original building now remains,

but in that most beautiful old abbey we may yet see Bishop Wilfrid's 'Frith Stool,' the stone seat where he who fled from his enemies might ever find sanctuary. 'The marble chair of St. Ambrose at Milan, which Wilfrid of course saw and studied,' says Bishop Browne, 'has as the only ornament down the front, exactly what the frith stool has on the top.' In 1113 the Austin Canons raised on the site of Wilfrid's church, many times the prey of Dane and of Scot, the abbey which is now the pride of the quiet little Border town of Hexham. Its 'Night Stairs' are the finest example remaining in England. By them the monks descended from their dormitories to the church for the nocturnal services, and a door from them communicated with a 'Sanctuary Chamber' where a sentry monk kept constant watch for fugitives who sought to save their lives under the mercifully protecting wings of Mother Church. Better than many written volumes can they speak to us of the old, old days of simple passions and of simple faith.

The reigns of the three sons of Malcolm Ceannmore and of his wife St. Margaret saw the establishment of many a monastery on either side of the Cheviots. By Eadgar, as the result of a miraculous vision—so legend tells us—Coldingham was refounded. Donald Bane, brother of Malcolm Ceannmore, had usurped the Scottish throne, and Eadgar and his army, on their way against him, halted at Durham. To

Eadgar, in the night watches, appeared the holy Cuthbert.

'Victory shall be thine,' said the saint. 'Procure my banner from the monastery, have it borne in the van of thine army on the morrow, and before it the hosts of the usurper shall flee in terror.' The saint was obeyed; the soldiery of Donald Bane treacherously deserted him, and by a glorious victory Eadgar won back his father's crown.

> 'Coldynghame than founded he,
> And rychely gert it dowyt be
> Of Saynt Ebb a sweet Hallow,
> Saynt Cuthbert thair thaie honowre now.'

To Alexander, Eadgar's brother and successor, many a religious house owed its foundation; but it is David I., that 'sair sanct for the crown,' as his descendant called him, that we have to thank for most of the beautiful abbeys whose ruins give an extra nobility and dignity to the Border, and help to fire the imagination of the most prosaic dweller on the plains of utilitarianism.

Eadgar, David's brother, calling himself *Rex Scotorum*, had addressed his subjects as 'Scots and English.' Alexander was less the king and friend of Angles and of Normans, than friend and king of the Celts. But David I. was a product of Norman civilisation. He had spent his youth in England at the court of his sister Maud, wife of Henry I.—'Mold

the god quen,' according to her monument at Winchester. David 'had been freed from the rust of Scottish barbarity, and polished from a boy from his intercourse and familiarity with us,' writes William of Malmesbury, with a complacency that might have furiously annoyed the Celtic party of that time. One wonders if it was love for the country where he spent his days before he entered on his strenuous life as ruler of a land still little civilised, or if it was affection for his sister that made him choose to be known before his accession to the throne, not as brother of William I. of Scotland, but as 'Earl David, brother of the Queen of the English.' Maybe he had not too much cause for loving the wild people of the North, for his mother, Queen Margaret, was lying dead in Edinburgh Castle when Donald Bane and his Highlanders laid siege to it. Honour to a dead Saxon queen her sons could not well have expected to be paid by Celts, with fighting blood aflame, on the war trail against the nation that they hated. And when David and his brothers, protected by a dense easterly haar—a chilly pall, grey and impenetrable, covering up, blotting out, everything,—stole away from the castle's west postern, bearing the body of one of the best of mothers and noblest of queens, and fled to Dunfermline to find sanctuary for it there, her young son must have longed that his own land might one day know some of the gentleness of Norman chivalry.

Matilda, the rich young widow whom David married, daughter and heiress of the Earl of Northumberland, had been the wife of Simon de Senlis, a Norman knight. Through her, David, already Earl of Cumbria and Lothian, gained the Earldom of Northampton, the honour of Huntingdon, and laid claim to the Earldom of Northumberland. The Wood of Caledon, though its limits were narrowing, still formed a large part of his earldom. It was known now as 'The Forest of Selkirk'—'My Waste,' Earl David called it—and was used as pasture-lands for the Earl's flocks and herds, and as a preserve quite sufficiently regal for princes to hunt in.

'Ettricke Foreste is a feir foreste,
In it grows manie a semelie trie;
There 's hart and hynd, and dae and rae
And of a' wilde bestis grete plentie.'

Foresters, shepherds, and neatherds were the chief inhabitants of the Forest, but near a little shieling occupied by these people, some Culdees (religious offshoots from the great parent stem of Iona) had planted a church—Scheleskirche, the Church of the Shieling. One knows not whether the little kirk stood where Selkirk now is, not many miles from Galuschel—the shieling by the Gala—or if it was 'bigged' up the valley of the Ettrick or the Yarrow. But, from the woods of Tiron in Picardy, Earl David brought thirteen Benedictines to succeed the Culdees

in their little church in the Forest. They were not merely monks, priests practising Christian doctrines, but skilled painters, carvers, carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, and husbandmen, who were able to teach many things to the subjects of their patron. To his Tironensians, David, as Earl, and, later, as King, granted handsome privileges. To them belonged the right of pasturing their flocks in the Forest, and they were given not merely 'the lands of Selkirk,' including the vales of Ettrick and Yarrow, and much besides, but the 'towns of Midlem, Bowden, and Aldona (Holydene), the whole lordship of Melrose, lands in Sprouston and Berwick, shares in fishing, parts of burgh dues, a tenth of the "Kain" cheeses of Galloway, half the skins of his kitchen, a tenth of the hides of the stags which his huntsmen killed, an equal share of his fishing water about Selkirk, and equal right to his woods and pastures. In England, land at Hardingstrop, besides the mill and fields near the bridge at Northampton.' This munificent endowment was dedicated by David for evermore to the Abbey of Selkirk, 'in honour of St. Mary, and of St. John the Evangelist, for the weal of his own soul, of the souls of his father and mother, brothers and sisters, and all his ancestors.'

The Culdees who were thus superseded by the black-robed monks of Tiron, had fallen into lax ways since the days of the brotherhood at Hii. They were rarely

celibates, and they had arrived at a convenient method of providing for their families by appropriating common property for their individual use, and by having a hereditary succession of priesthood. Their irregularities David tried in vain to reform. 'I give to the canons of St. Andrews the island of Loch Leven,' says one of his charters, 'that they may there institute their order of canons; and the Culdees, who may be found there' (the Culdees of St. Serf's, these were, proud possessors of a library of sixteen volumes), 'if they please to live regularly, let them remain in peace under the canons; but if any of them resist this rule, I will and command that they be turned out of the island.'

To a man who ruled himself as well as did David I., the irregularities of the lapsed followers of Columba must have been detestable, and the substitution of cultured men, members of strict monastic bodies, for the loose-living and probably little educated priests, was the kindest thing that he could have done for his subjects.

Holyrood, Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, Kelso, Dundrennan, Kynloss, Newbattle, and Cambuskenneth were founded or refounded by him. At Lesmahagow he erected a priory; at Berwick a convent for Cistercian nuns, and he founded the episcopal sees of Ross and Dunkeld.

Practically, we may say, he treated his kingdom

of Scotland as a mission-field, and supplied to the people of the land those missionaries in his opinion best qualified to teach Christianity and to educate their converts in all the arts of peace.

To St. Bernard he showed his devotion not only by bringing drafts of his followers to Scotland, but by pilgrimaging to France to see the saint. A monk of Tiron tells us how the Scottish king 'braved the terrors of the British Sea' because of his 'ardent desire to see the man of God.' But he reached Tiron too late. St. Bernard was dead, and all that King David could do was to kneel in prayer at his shrine. 'The beld[1] of all his kin,' Wyntoun the chronicler styles the man who did so much to beautify the Borderland and to educate its people. His biographer, Aelred, writes of him with a hearty affection and an enthusiasm that says much. 'I have seen him,' says the abbot, 'with his foot in the stirrup, going to hunt, at the prayer of a poor petitioner leave his horse, return into the hall, give up his purpose for the day, and kindly and patiently hear the cause.' 'He often used to sit at the door of the palace, hear the causes of the poor and old, who were warned upon certain days, as he came into each district.' 'If it happened that a priest or a soldier, or a monk, rich or poor, foreigner or native, merchant or rustic, had audience of him, he conversed so condescendingly,

[1] Paragon.

and gave such attention to the affairs of each, that each thought he cared only for him, and so all went away happy and satisfied.'

A born diplomatist, evidently, this king who ruled at a time when diplomacy was a weapon unknown to the Picts of Galloway and to the other Border folk, who knew only how to settle differences by spear thrust or sword play.

'The land,' writes his panegyrist, 'which was uncultivated and barren, he has made productive and fertile. Thou, Scotland, formerly the beggar from other countries, didst bear on thy own hard clod nothing but famine to thy inhabitants; now, softer and more fertile than other lands, thou relievest the wants of neighbouring countries from thy abundance. He it was who adorned thee with castles and cities, who filled thy ports with merchandise, and brought the riches of other nations to mix with thine own. It was he who changed the shaggy cloaks for costly robes, and covered thy former nakedness with fine linen and purple; he who reformed thy barbarous manners with Christian religion, and who taught thy priests a more becoming life!'

As in the case of most great men, other biographers might have given a very different account of David as king. He had Norman friends, Norman favourites. In his desire to Normanise his kingdom the claims of his Scottish subjects were set aside with a high hand.

The hearts of many of the descendants of the old peoples north of the Tweed must have swelled with bitterness when they saw the richest lands given to newcomers from Normandy, the foreign monks fattening on the bounties of a Scottish king, while they themselves—of the same blood as those who had resisted the Romans and fought against the slayers from across the Northern sea—were looked on as barbarians, to whom the royal favours of civilisation and Christianisation, but of naught else, were granted.

That David was a sportsman in the ordinary acceptation of the word, if not in a wider sense, we see from the old charters for the preservation of game in his Forest of Ettrick. His successors in the ownership of the Forest were equally stringent. A present of game from the Forest was a royal gift that was then worth the having. To the monks of Coldingham Robert the Bruce granted the privilege of taking yearly from his Selkirk preserves five stags for celebrating the festival of St. Cuthbert's Translation. The Forest, so says tradition, was the birthplace of the Bruce's great-grandmother; at Holydene, Isabel, daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon, was born, and amongst the hoary trees of the old deer-park there many a king may have hunted.

In 1235 Roger de Avenel, the then proprietor, defended himself against the sporting instincts of the Forest monks by reserving for himself the right of

game—hart and hind, boar and roe, falcons and tercels. The monks were not allowed to hunt with hounds or nets. Traps were only to be set for wolves, nor were they allowed to disturb the eyries or to take the nests of hawks or of falcons. The trees in which these birds had once built were to be held sacred until next nesting season proved whether they were going to build there again or no. Until the reign of William the Lion no buildings save wattled shelters for the herds were permitted throughout the length of the Forest. There was then granted at Whitelee near Galashiels a site for a byre of one hundred cows, with a shed for hay, and a house where the brethren might have a fire. Not only dairy farmers and husbandmen were these Border monks, but horsemen and breeders of horses. Before he went to the Holy Land in 1247, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, parted with his stud of brood mares in Lauderdale to the monks of Melrose, who paid him the sum of one hundred merks sterling.

For thirteen years did the monks of Tiron pursue their labours at Scheleskirche, but in 1136, when David their patron had donned the crown, they abandoned it for a more congenial home. There was really every reason why they should leave Selkirk for 'the place which is called Kelcho,' as the old charter has it. Selkirk was a mere clachan in the wilds of the Forest. At Kelso, by the fair river Tweed, the royal castle of Roxburgh was a powerful

sentry to guard the house of the holy men. The population there must have exceeded that of Selkirk in numbers and very greatly have differed in quality from the herds and foresters of Ettrick and Yarrow and Minchmoor. Moreover, Kelso was much more easy of access for men of rank and of culture and their following. A waggon road ran between it and Berwick, then a flourishing seaport town. The Abbeys of Melrose, Jedburgh, and Dryburgh were within easy hail. It was practically on the high road to Northumberland, where at Blanchland, Hexham, Tynemouth, Alnwick, Brinkburn, and Lindisfarne other religious houses flourished, and helped to spread civilisation and education amongst the Border people. Speedily did the Abbey of Kelso attain ascendency over the other Scottish monasteries. Ere long it was the ecclesiastical centre of Scotland; its abbot ranked highest of the spiritual lords of Parliament, and was granted a mitre by the Pope. Yet another favour bestowed on the Abbey by His Holiness was the right of excommunicating by name, on Sundays or holidays, with ringing of bells and extinguishing of candles, all ill-doers and enemies of the church at Kelso. It was not wise for even the most powerful of the Norman barons to offend the monks of Kelso in those days.

As the noble and beautiful structures of their rearing dominated the landscape of the Border, so

did the monks rule the people. They held the bulk of the Church lands in their own hands, and so were enabled to teach the meaning of agriculture and of good husbandry to men who knew much less of the use of the ploughshare than of the sword.

'The monastery kept alive the flickering light of literature. It gathered together and protected the spirits too delicate for a rough season. It reared up a barrier against oppression, and taught the strong to respect the meek and gentle. The monastery was the sphere of mind, when all around was material and gross.' So says Mr. Cosmo Innes, speaking of times when the monks still led the steps of a wayward flock into the paths of peace, and when it would have been a hideous injustice to look within the cloister walls for all the fleshy lusts which war against the spirit.

At Jedburgh—Jedworth, as it then was—the Austin Friars from the Abbey of St. Quentin at Beauvais held rule. The habit of black cassock, white rochet, and black cloak and hood of the bearded canons must have been a familiar sight to the many French nobles who came over to the wedding of Yolande, daughter of the Count de Dreux, with Alexander III., King of Scots. It was in October 1285 that the Abbey was gay with wedding guests when, out of the unseen, there came what the superstitious percipients took to mean a warning of woe and disaster. The wedding had been celebrated with great pomp. The

banquet was over, and the evening festivities were at their height, when a masque which had been arranged for the entertainment of the royal pair and their noble guests entered the hall. Gorgeously dressed revellers, dancing and playing on musical instruments, passed in gay procession before King Alexander and his beautiful queen. The grey walls that were used to look down on black-robed monks saw in the light of the many tapers what must have looked like a brilliant flower-garden. But behind the masquers followed a dark shadow, a something that did not seem to touch with living feet the solid earth. Horror fell on the company as they looked at the figure that grimly followed each measure that they trod. Some vowed that they saw a skeleton form under the black robe, a grinning skull, and all believed that they had watched a dance of death. As unaccountably as it had appeared the spectre vanished, leaving behind it dire gloom and foreboding. Less than six months later there were many who recalled it when news came of the great storm that had fallen upon Scotland. King Alexander had met with a violent death on the rocks of Fife; the young bride of Jedburgh Abbey was a widow. Death that came as a wedding-guest had claimed his own.

In 1513 a convent of Franciscans was established in Jedburgh. The brothers wore a grey woollen gown and cowl, a rope for girdle, and went about barefoot.

They were not allowed to possess any property save the ground whereon their house stood, nor were they permitted by their austere order to have any visible means of subsistence, but lived on the charity of others. By turns, wallet on shoulder, they went through the town and round the Jed valley, begging the daily bread of themselves and their brethren. 'The Begging Friars' they naturally came to be called.

At Melrose a body of Cistercians from Rievaulx in Yorkshire succeeded the brethren from Iona, and when first established in their beautiful abbey in a green valley of the Tweed, their rule, in rigid simplicity of form of worship and in daily life and conduct, could scarcely have been exceeded by those who followed the guidance of Columba himself. No carved work, silver or gold, or painted glass was permitted in their abbey. Their crosses were of plain wood. Pictures were banned, and although they might transcribe the works of others if they pleased, original literary work on the part of the brethren was discouraged. Seven times within twenty-four hours did they perform their devotions. Their clothing was of the coarsest, their manual labour real drudgery. Flesh was only allowed to the sick, and even fish, eggs, milk, butter, and cheese were regarded as dainties, permissible only on high days and holidays. In Lent they fasted daily until six in the evening. In 1246 Matthew, an abbot who previously as cellarer

had himself suffered from Lenten abstinence, won for himself the kind regard of the monks by allowing them on Fridays in Lent, when bread and water was their only fare, a finer sort of bread, known as pittance bread. In later days a charter of Robert the Bruce assigns the sum of £100, to be drawn from the customs of Berwick, Edinburgh, or Haddington, to furnish each of the monks of Melrose with a daily addition to their commons of rice boiled with milk, or of almonds, or peas, to be called 'The King's Mess.' Yet, despite their own scant fare, those monks of Melrose and the other Border abbeys were famed for their hospitality. No traveller was turned empty away. To others whose fasts and hard labour were ordained by hard necessity and not by Cistercian rule, the monks of Melrose, in the good old days, never failed in charity.

While Waltheof, son of the Earl of Northampton and stepson of David I., was abbot, a devastating famine hung over Scotland. To the monastery at Melrose the starving people of Tweedside and Liddesdale and the Lammermuirs flocked, seeking bread. Four thousand in all, we are told, came to Melrose and built huts for themselves in the fields and woods near the Abbey, believing that the brethren might, even by miracle, supply the hungry with food. But lean years had taxed to their uttermost the barns of the monks. There remained to them barely enough

corn to carry them on until harvest. Oxen, sheep, and pigs still remained to them, and a good store of butter and cheese—as befitted wise husbandmen—but were they to sacrifice all they had in order to ration a starving host, starvation must yet only be delayed. Then it was that the miracle happened. To the Abbey's farm at Eildon went Waltheof and Tyna the cellarer. In the granary lay a heap of wheat. With his staff Waltheof struck it, and prayed for a blessing. To Gattonside, on the other side of the river, they went next, and Waltheof blessed the rye that was stored there, and commanded that daily rations of it and of the wheat should be doled out to the starvation camp without the Abbey walls. They were thus, says a chronicler, 'fed continually for three months from the stores the Abbot had blessed, which lasted till the corn in the fields was ready for the sickle.'

They were other times, other manners, from those that originated the mocking saying—

> 'The monks of Melrose made good kail
> On Fridays when they fasted.
> They wanted neither beef nor ale
> As long as their neighbours' lasted.'

None of the monks of the new Abbey, even in the early days of Cistercian asceticism, could have attained quite to the rigorous self-crucifixion of a holy man who lived at Old Melrose in the closing years of the seventh

century. Drythelm had, in a trance, when his friends believed him dead, passed through a Purgatory worthy of Dante himself. The 'clear dream and solemn vision' revolutionised his life. He gave up the world, retired to Melrose, and there, in a cell apart from the other monks, sought to purify his soul by most cruelly mortifying the flesh. Day in, day out, summer and winter, the visionary would plunge into the Tweed, regardless of autumn spate and of winter ice, and there recite psalms and prayers. He never undressed, and his garments were allowed to dry on him. To wondering monks who asked how he was able to endure the bitter chill, he would make reply—'Elsewhere have I witnessed greater cold and pain.' And they would marvel reverently, listening as to one risen from the dead.

Whether popular legend of later days was founded on the tales of Drythelm the monk, it is hard to say. But there is a tale of a nameless monk of Old Melrose that is better known to the country people than is the story of the holy ascetic.

A young monk, so the story goes, came to love a lady of the house of Bemersyde, and with her fell into sin. The matter came to the ears of his spiritual superiors. The lady mysteriously disappeared, and one of the penances inflicted on the erring brother was that he must, like St. Drythelm, daily plunge into a pool in the Tweed, below the monastery, known

still as the Haly Wheel (*i.e.* Holy Pool, from *wiel*, an eddy). Never once did the monk fail to pay the penalty of his unsanctified love, and never, through all the years, did he speak to living man of the reason of his punishment. When death had ended his living purgatory, the Haly Wheel was haunted not by a gaunt and haggard monk, but by the lady who shared his guilt. He who goes at midnight, when Tweed is running high, when black clouds scud across the moon's pale face, and stands near the Haly Wheel, may hear the scream of a drowning woman rise above the rush and moan of the water. Out of the pool there then arises the white figure of a lady, and the waters divide to let her pass. One huge wave rolls towards Old Melrose, another towards the heights of Bemersyde. But neither place is reached by the luckless lady, who, with a despairing cry, sinks again into the darkness whence she came. The waves fall back, the water in the eddy swirls round once more, and Tweed flows on—wan water that has seen so much of tragedy, that has reflected so many secrets of passion and of crime.

The wicked priest has always been a favourite villain of fiction and of legend, and lone St. Mary's also owns a story of a sinful monk—

> 'That Wizard Priest, whose bones are thrust
> From company of holy dust,
> On which no sunbeam ever shines.'

'St. Mary of the Lowes,' or 'St. Mary of the Forest,' was the name by which was known the chapel standing high up on the hillside above St. Mary's Loch. Surely never anything but lonely can it have been, even in the days when Ettrick Forest echoed back the sound of the huntsman's horn, or the battle-cries of Border foemen. It was a dependency of Dryburgh. Many a time must white monks have toiled up the rough path between bracken and heather to the little church whose bell rang across the water of St. Mary's and the Loch of the Lowes.

Some four hundred yards beyond the scarcely distinguishable marks of the demolished chapel, and outside the little graveyard, is a mound known as 'Binram's Corse.' There Hogg places the grave of 'Mess John,' and popular tradition has it that the mound was raised over the body of a necromancing priest who died a violent death.

The last light on the altar went out long, long ago; long years ago was the last Mass sung. There is scarce a trace left of the chapel. The whaup wails over a deserted graveyard. The winds from Minchmoor sweep down the lochs across the vanished chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes.

'St. Mary's Loch lies shimmering still,
But St. Mary's Kirk bell's lang dune ringing;
There's naething now but the gravestane hill
To tell o' a' their loud psalm-singing.'

LONE ST. MARY'S

Most beautiful of all the beautiful sites where the monks came to hold their sway, was that of the Monastery of Dryburgh. Its name is supposed to have come from the Celtic *Darach Bruach*, 'the bank of the sacred grove of oaks,' or 'the settlement of the Druids.' The Druids had been superseded by the brethren from Iona, and they in their turn, in the reign of David I., gave place to a band of Premonstratensians, or White Canons, from the Abbey of Alnwick. The Tweed sweeps round the lands of Dryburgh, forming a peninsula, and those of the white-cloaked monks with their square caps of white felt, who had come direct from France, must have been reminded of their monastery in fair Picardy as they laboured in the fertile hay-fields and orchards down by the river. Salmon there were in plenty, trout for the catching, and eels, too, if one may judge from one's luck in later times, in muddy water near the Abbey after a spate. At first the Premonstratensians of Dryburgh were a poor body, and lived by the labours of their own hands, but their goodness brought them friends, and many a rich gift was bestowed on the Abbey. 'In time of hay-making and harvest,' says one historian, 'they went to work early in the morning and sometimes did not return home till after Vespers; but were bound to recite their prayers in the fields at the canonical hours.' Do the hinds who plough these fields by the river now, or who

labour in the hay-field at the close of a July day, never hear the far-away chime of the Angelus bell, and see the white monks bowing their heads, with folded hands, in prayer ?

In 1150 the monastery was founded, and, with its graveyard, was consecrated on St. Martin's Day, the 11th of November, ' that no demons might vex it.'

That, in spite of St. Martin, a demon did haunt it nearly six hundred years later, tradition tells us. The Abbey was in ruins, when, soon after the '45 had brought sorrow to many a true-hearted Scot, a half-crazed woman, a wanderer from whence none knew, took up her abode in a vault at Dryburgh. Her lover had gone to fight for Prince Charlie, and she had vowed that until his return she would never look upon the sun. When night fell she was accustomed to go to one of the neighbouring houses for alms, and at midnight would light a candle and return to her vault. During her absence, so she told those who fed her, a spirit, in form like a little man wearing heavy iron shoes, took charge of her cell, tidying it for her, and treading smooth the damp clay floor. 'Fatlips' was the name by which she knew him, and for many long years Fatlips was a terror to the country-folk. Her lover never came back, and to this day the dark and dreary vault has the power of chilling one's heart with the memory of a maimed life, into which the sun never returned. Sir Walter Scott's

*Eve of St. John* is supposed to owe its ending to the story of the hapless vagrant.

'There is a nun in Dryburgh bower
Ne'er looks upon the sun:
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.'

On the fair abbeys founded by David and other pious men, the hand of Time dealt cruelly. War, with her savage children of fire and blood and rapine, never allowed the Church to go scatheless. For century after century the Border abbeys were the prey of their country's enemies on the war-path, places to be looted and destroyed. The Reformation was scarcely less merciless to the beautiful buildings whose exquisite adornments savoured of idolatry to those of the reformed faith, and to us are left only the ruins of what might still have been our country's pride. Yet, ruined though they be, the abbeys are gallant monuments to those who made them, those whose other works yet speak, in ways that perhaps our eyes may not clearly see, our minds not entirely comprehend. For their beauty alone we owe our thanks to King David, to his Norman knights, and to the noble army of craftsmen who showed to the rude Border folk the riches of knowledge and of art.

It is an autumn afternoon; the rain has stopped, and the sun shines on the wet grass of the cloisters at Dryburgh. The purple clematis clings to the rosy

stone of the ruins, and high on the walls, above the refectory and the Abbot's parlour, the amber berries and yellow leaves of the barberry look like flames. But for the murmur of Tweed all is stillness and peace—a peace that passeth understanding.

Autumn has given place to winter. White doves, like the spirits of the pure in heart, preen their feathers and spread their wings against the blue sky on the snow-covered ruins, high above where Eloïse Targa, and the great Wizard, and many another whose work is done, lie asleep. Still no sound but the low song of the river, and the murmur of doves.

'Orate pro animâ Davidis Regis'

would here be a petition quite easy to fulfil.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

**And the cry of the two hosts went up through the higher air.**
*Iliad,* Book XIII.

If the apparition of the skeleton masquer of Jedburgh Abbey indeed foretold the death of a great king, equally much was it the portent of death to many and many a warrior in the years to come.

Since Roman days, the Border had never been without some undried stain of slain men's blood. Even when David I. was king, his claim to the Earldom of Northumberland meant much bloodshed, and the perpetration of many horrors by Scottish armies in Northumberland and Durham, by English soldiers in the Lothians and Roxburgh. During the reign of his son, William the Lion, English and Scots fought again, but the seventy-two years covered by the reigns of the Lion's two successors have been called 'the golden age of Scottish history.' Through those long years Scotland and England were virtually at peace. If civil war now and again blazed out north of the Forth, at least the waters of the Border streams

were not reddened by the life-blood of the rival nations. Celt, Norman, and Saxon had at length been fused into one people, a people strong enough to withstand the assaults of any foe from without, when the tragic death of the last of the Celtic Kings left Scotland rudderless. The ship was now a well-built ship, but without a captain; and with a crew jealous and ever ready to come to blows over questions of precedence, it was far from being a craft fit to meet the waves and winds and storms of a time when kings went in for empire-making with strong and unscrupulous hands. That it was not driven upon the rocks a submerged wreck, the prey for evermore of other greedy nations, but passed through stormy years to sail in triumph into port at last, is a magnificent fact, for which all honour be given to the two patriots who piloted it through.

An evil year for Scotland was that of 1296. At Berwick, before the Christmas of 1295, some school children were terrified by the apparition of a bloody Christ. At Berwick, in the spring of the year, there were no terrors left unfulfilled. The little Maid of Norway was dead. Edward I. of England had laid his mail-clad hand on the kingless country, and with well-gripped sword had proclaimed himself its overlord. His puppet king, John Balliol, had been allowed for four years to wear a crown that might, for anything regal that it carried with it,

have been of tinsel. He had then been mercilessly punished for insubordination by that terrible siege of Berwick, when the indiscriminate massacre by the angry monarch set afire in the breast of every Scot—more especially of every Border Scot—that spirit of rage and resentment against England, of enmity even to the death, that less than a hundred years ago was smouldering still. 'As leaves in the autumn the Scots fell,' says a chronicler, and for days the Tweed was stained crimson as it ran across the bar into the grey sea beyond, carrying the dead with it. Edward I. stood sponsor for a race of Border reivers. He was responsible for the times when the counties north and south of the Cheviots lay in ashes, while widows mourned like the mothers of Rama.

The Scots began their vengeance by ravaging Tynedale as far as Hexham, at Corbridge on the Tyne mercilessly burning in their schools two hundred 'little clerks,' as schoolboys were then called. The battle of Dunbar was Edward's reply to their revenge. It was an English victory that cost the Scots ten thousand and fifty-five men. As far as the Forest of Ettrick the English pursued the routed army, slaying and sparing not.

'Ragman Roll' was a result of King Edward's subsequent triumphal march through Scotland. Some two thousand landowners subscribed their names to

this demoralised document, as faithful lieges to their sovereign lord, the King of the English. *Pactum Serva*—'Keep covenant'—was Edward's own motto, yet he obviously acted on the principle that 'Promises, like pie-crust, are made to be broken,' and the landholders of Scotland in those days were no more punctilious about the keeping of their pledged word than was the king they had sworn to serve. The name of Robert the Bruce appears on the Roll, but not that of William Wallace, perhaps because Wallace was not sufficiently big game for the English monarch. 'From his den, as it were,' says Fordun, 'William Wallace lifted up his head.' From his boyhood William Wallace, younger son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie in Renfrewshire, had had a wholesome hatred of the English race. There are tales, probably more or less mythical, of fights with English soldiers when he was still a boy—a well-developed young giant—more likely to be keen about the size of the baskets of trout that he caught than about questions of patriotism and loyalty. Later on, his wife was brutally killed by Englishmen at Lanark, and for her death he made the life of Andrew de Livingston, English Sheriff of Clydesdale, pay the penalty.

Thereafter Wallace was an outlaw, the boldest and most famous brigand of his time. But it was not long ere he ceased to fight for his own hand.

His blood feud was merged into one so great that he was no longer a robber chief, dealing out unsparing vengeance to his own enemies, but a patriot whose life was dedicated to the redemption of his own country from slavery to an alien usurper. For some time he carried on a guerilla warfare and made his stronghold in the Forest of Ettrick. 'Wallace's Trench'—a work of a thousand feet in length, near the Hangingshaw, on a steep hillside between Ettrick and Yarrow—remains to this day. Ere long his countrymen realised that for them had arisen a champion who knew not the meaning of fear, and to 'the dowie dens of Yarrow' came those who held their country dear—

> 'Fra Tawydaill cum gud men mony ane;
> Out of Jedwart, with Ruthvane at yar tyd,
> Togyddr socht fra mony diuerss syd.'

Sir Nicol de Rutherfurd came with sixty followers, and a popular rhyme tells us that

> 'When Wallace came to Gladswood Cross
> Haig of Bemersyde met him with many good horse.'

In 1297 Wallace, with a following of Borderers, boldly marched northward, and laid siege to Dundee. Edward I. was in Flanders, but a strong English army under Cressingham and Warenne hastened up from Berwick to quench the rising. At Stirling they found that Wallace's army had come to meet

them and lay in battle array on the other side of the Forth. Two friars were sent by the English general to 'that brigand Wallace,' to offer terms.

'Go back,' said Wallace, 'and tell your masters that we came not here to ask for peace as a boon, but to fight for our freedom. Let them come up when they will, and they shall find us ready to beard them.'

Ready they were indeed. The English were shamefully routed, and the victorious army led by Wallace and a certain Andrew Murray—a good Borderer, if we may judge from his name—sought to compensate themselves for past lean years by invading England, slaying and plundering as they went. Mercilessly did they harry Northumberland and Cumberland, not sparing the abbeys. 'Sacred service ceased in all monasteries and churches from Carlisle to Newcastle.' Their march began in September, and in December came snow—miraculously sent by St. Cuthbert, said the English admirers of that saint—which meant many hardships to the Scots. An English chronicler has handed down to posterity tales of barbarities practised on harmless nuns and monks by the conquering army, but his nationality may account for a certain amount of prejudice, leading to uncomplimentary inaccuracies. Even he, however, has something good to say for Scotland's hero. At Hexham a party of Scots laid violent hands on three

of the Austin Canons. 'Show us your treasury or die!' they said. But either the canons did not know or would not tell, and it would have gone hard with the monks had not Wallace entered at the critical moment. He reprimanded his men, and asked one of the canons to say Mass. While Wallace retired to lay aside his armour for the elevation of the Host, his Scots stole the chalice. He apologised, saying that it was not possible in such things to control his people, but gave to the monastery a document granting it protection in the name of 'the leaders of the army of Scotland.'

On his return to Scotland, at 'the Forest Kirk' of Selkirk, Wallace, the outlaw of the Forest, was appointed 'Guardian of Scotland and leader of its armies.' But not for long was he to maintain his country's cause against Edward, 'The Hammer of the Scots.' In July 1298 the battle of Falkirk took place. A huge host under the English King met Wallace's little patriot army of Clydesdale pikemen, Highland swordsmen, and bowmen from Ettrick Forest.

'I have brought you to the ring, dance as you may,' he said, when he had drawn them up in battle array. But the measure trod by the Scottish horse was a shameful one. At the first onslaught of the English cavalry they turned and fled without drawing sword, leaving spearmen and bowmen to defend their country's honour. The English cavalry then charged

the bowmen, who, when bows had to be cast aside, defended themselves with their short swords as best they could. A gallant stand they made, only to fall as their descendants fell at Flodden. As they lay dead on the field after the battle their enemies marvelled at their tall stature and great beauty. No longer defended by the Flowers of the Forest, the pikemen fell an easy prey to the grey goosequill of the English archers, and the cavalry completed the rout, sweeping the broken army before them in the fierce tide of victory. Sir John Graham—'He was a lord of the south countrie'—lay among the slain. 'Alas! my best brother, my true friend when I was hardest bestead!' said Wallace, as he kissed the dead face ere he himself had to flee before his victors.

A hunted outlaw now was William Wallace. A price was put on his head by Edward of England, but for seven years he succeeded in withstanding those who hunted him; for seven years he continued to work and to fight for his country's freedom. In 1305 Sir John Menteith, a Scottish knight, sold his friend and his own honour. Wallace was betrayed to the English. He, than whom surely never was truer man, was tried in London as a traitor, and at Smithfield suffered a barbarous and shameful death. As a traitor's, his body was hacked in pieces and exhibited as a warning to all enemies of England and of her king. His head was stuck on London Bridge

for sun, wind, snow and rain to beat on, to be pecked at by the gulls that come up the river with the tide. One of his arms was exposed at Berwick, a warlike town that was never spared any horror by the beneficent builder of its Edwardian Wall. His death was a blot upon England's nobleness almost as great as was that of the little French maid who, a hundred years later, was made to suffer for her native land.

William Wallace was only thirty-five when his fight for Scotland ended, but through the stormy years of his manhood he lived for his country; for his country his life was sacrificed. In times when men too often were fighting for their own hands, he towers giant-like above their pettinesses and party strife, a leal-hearted, single-minded patriot. What our country owes to him we can but reverently guess at. Only God knows.

On the Border, the Wars of Independence brought evil days. The Border abbeys—representing unearned increment—were constantly subjected to attacks from military buccaneers. The monastery of Kelso became a ruin; its monks subsisted on the alms of other religious houses.

For the death of Wallace meant only the end of the first chapter of a desperate struggle. Wallace's head still bleached on the bridge over the Thames, when Robert the Bruce arose to fight for Scotland's honour. At first Bruce was no patriot. Before a man is prepared

to fight, to suffer, and to die for it, he must be very sure which country is indeed his own. As an Anglo-Norman Bruce could not be expected to have any passionate sentiment for Scotland, which was not the land of his birth, but merely that of his possessions. He loved his own lands, his own importance, much more than he loved the country of his mother, daughter of the Earl of Carrick. Most of all did he love the crown of Scotland as a possible future property of his own. He played fast and loose with patriotism. He was King Edward's man when King Edward treated him well. Thwarted, he kicked like a spoilt child, and rebelled against the monarch who refused to give him all that he demanded. In 1304 he was Edward's 'loyal and faithful Robert de Brus,' in pursuit of Wallace, whom he defeated in March at Peebles. In the same year he was in charge of the English guns at the siege of Stirling. In all probability he was present at the execution of Wallace. As one of the royal retinue he must often have ridden over London Bridge, past the head of the man whose love of country brought him the death of a traitor. Whether the influence of Wallace did aught to stir a heart that in later days proved to be so great, who can say? Jealousy and hatred of a favoured rival seem more likely causes for bringing him into the path he trod. In the Church of the Greyfriars at Dumfries, in February 1306, Robert the Bruce effectually burned

his ships by slaying the Red Comyn. He could chop and change no longer. To the death his lot was cast with those Scots who could not temporise with the English King, because they were recognised once and for all as England's enemies.

Whatever else Scotsmen may have known Bruce to be, at least they recognised him as a fearless warrior. Now that he had flung his gauntlet in the face of the English King and become a proclaimed outlaw, they could feel that again they owned a leader who would fight to the death. It was no little matter for any mortal man to defy Edward I. England was then, perhaps, the greatest power in Europe. Its navy ruled the seas. Its barons were descended from the conquerors of the Saracens, the very flower of chivalry. They were all united under one great, bonding, feudal system, and their followers were ready to fight and to die for them. The English yeomanry helped to form a magnificent army—that army which, not many years later, humbled France itself. Moreover, the treasury of England was well equipped and more than fit to stand the drain of a long and arduous war. All this Robert the Bruce knew well. He had grown up in England, fought under Edward. He had seen the Scots with their targes of leather, their light spears and clumsy swords, rush against the mail-clad English warriors on their magnificent chargers; had watched

them being broken and dashed to destruction like little boats that are threshed against great rocks in a storm. He had looked on at his mother's countrymen being mowed down by a fearful flight of English arrows as a scythe mows down swathes of daisies and grass in a meadow. He knew that the Scots were wretchedly poor, badly fed, miserably housed in hovels of turf, branch-thatched. A famine had recently brought them near starvation, and the country was additionally weakened by years of English rule and tyranny and by the evils of war. Jealousy had divided the Scottish nobles. Everywhere was discord and suspicion. There was no army, no royal treasury behind King Robert. Yet, with forty men at his back, he dared all.

To his standard, while he was still an uncrowned king, came all loyal Scotsmen who did not fear openly to defy Edward of England, their common enemy. At St. Andrews, as page to his uncle, Bishop Lamberton, was James Douglas, the pale, stalwart, dark-eyed lad, whose father, Sir William Douglas, known as 'Le Hardi,' was one of the Border warriors upon whom had fallen Edward's unsparing enmity. Douglas of Blackhouse, up Yarrow, was Governor of Berwick when it was sacked by the English, and for that crime, and for other failures in allegiance to the King of England, he was for years imprisoned in irons, his lands were forfeited, and in the Tower

of London he died. An impenitent rebel he evidently was, for his gaoler at Berwick wrote of him to King Edward—'He is still very savage and very abusive' (*uncore mout sauvage e mout araillez*).

'The Good Lord James,' or 'The Black Douglas,' to use the names by which we know him best, was educated in Glasgow and in Paris, and was 'the most complete and best accomplished young man in all Scotland, or in any other land.' On his return from France, Bishop Lamberton presented him to Edward I. and craved for him the restitution of his father's lands, and a place at the English court.

'The lands are given to better men than you,' said Edward; 'and had they not been given, still they should never have been yours. I have no service for the sons of traitors.'

No spur from without was needed for the patriotism of James Douglas when news of the Bruce's rising reached St. Andrews. He borrowed a horse from the Bishop, and, with his blessing, sped off to join the Bruce. At Erricstane, a lonely pass near Tweedsmuir, he met Bruce on his way from Lochmaben to Glasgow. Where, even well on in spring, snow still lies in hollows in the hills, and deep behind the stone dykes, and where the winds of February and March blow cruelly over the moors, Bruce welcomed to his ranks the man who, of all the friends he ever knew, was the truest and the best,—a man who never, to his

life's end, bowed the knee to any king save to Robert, King of Scots.

While the Bruce and his queen and their little band of faithful outlaws endured all the hardships and dangers of the hunted, Douglas was the one who did most of all for the comfort of those he served. He was a Borderer, and therefore a sportsman, and better skilled than any other in tracking and slaying the red deer in the Highland forest where the royal party lay hid—better skilled than any other was he in catching salmon and trout from the northern rivers and lonely mountain burns. He was ever gay, ever fearless, always assured that however black the present seemed, all would yet go well. What better friend could any landless king desire? As the Bruce's affairs prospered, to the Black Douglas was given, during the troublous years while Scotland laboured for her freedom, the onerous task of making the Borders, now under English rule, the proud possession of a Scottish King. With all the tact and caution of a veteran well trained in scouting, he guarded the lands he was to gain for the king before he openly captained his troops to victory.

Late one evening he came to a house on the Water of Lyne in Peeblesshire, meaning to spend the night there with his handful of followers. As he drew near, lights told him that it was already occupied. The voices of men who had supped well were raised

in altercation, and Douglas bade his men surround the house and listen well.

'The *Devil*!' said a voice from within.

'No true Scot is here,' thought Douglas. '*Deil* is what our lads would say.'

Straightway the door was burst in, and ere those within could grip their swords, the slogan of 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' told them into whose hands they had fallen. Randolph, Bruce's nephew, and future valiant ally, was among the prisoners.

In Douglasdale, his own territory, by the terrible victory and vengeance of 'The Douglas Larder,' the Douglas struck a powerful blow for his king. Later on, when the English had rebuilt the charred ruins, he retook 'Castle Dangerous,' and for the tale of its fall one must go to Sir Walter Scott.

To Tweedside he came then. On a high, grassy mound, overlooking Tweed and Teviot, which glide under the shadow of great trees until they unite a little further to the south, there are still to be found some grey stones and ruined fragments of what were once the walls of Roxburgh Castle. Few royal castles have seen more fighting. Few have oftener changed hands. Now Scots, now English—Scots once again, English once more—its garrisons changed with bewildering frequency. Scarce a stone of its ruins now but what must have cost ten good lives at least—lives of those who defended it, those who attacked. A gallant

army of the noble dead might guard its ruined battlements now, captained by the shade of a Scottish King.

On a dark February night in 1314, at the end of a Feast Day—Shrove Tuesday to the English, to the Scots Fastern's E'en—when most of the garrison as well as those without had been making merry and drinking deep, the Black Douglas with sixty men crept up to the fields that lie between the Tweed and Roxburgh Castle. A handy craftsman, known as 'Sym of the Ledehouse,' had made ingenious scaling ladders of ropes with hooks at the end, and these they carried with them. They hid their armour under black cloaks, left their horses at a safe distance, and crept forward to the castle on all fours. Presently they were so near the wall that, above the murmur of Tweed and Teviot as they rushed in winter flood through their wooded banks, they could hear what passed in the castle. Bursts of drunken revelry came from within, and on the walls two of the guard were talking.

'The farmer down there is having a gay Shrovetide,' said one to the other. 'He has left all his oxen out.'

'He will be less merry to-morrow,' said the other, 'if the Black Douglas drives them off in the night.'

Carelessly the men glanced down at the dark moving forms that they took for black cattle, and strode on.

On the battlements, away from the shouts of the revellers, sat a woman hushing her fretful child to sleep. So terrible had Douglas become to the English, who knew him only as a fierce and merciless warrior who nearly always won, that it was of him that the mother sang—

'Hush ye, hush ye, little pet ye,
Hush ye, hush ye, do not fret ye,
The Black Douglas shall not get ye.'

'You are not so sure of that,' said a voice close beside her, and a mailed hand was laid on her shoulder. There stood the Black Douglas, a tall, grim figure, his dark eyes smiling at her fright. Sym of the Ledehouse had climbed up a ladder just behind the Douglas, but as he clambered on to the wall, a sentinel going his round came on him and drove at him with his lance. A quick upward thrust of a knife, and the man dropped dead.

'All goes as we will, haste ye up!' said Sym to his friends below, heaving over the sentinel's body to show them how he had sped. Quickly the others swarmed after him, and in a minute the garrison was roused by shouts of 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' The fight was a fierce one. The Warden, Sir Gilmyn de Fiennes, a gallant Gascon, with most of his men slain, still held out in the castle tower. When daylight came, the Scots attacked the tower with a deadly fusilade of arrows. De Fiennes was struck

in the face and so grievously wounded that he was forced to surrender, but only on condition that he and the remnant of his garrison should march out with all the honours of war and be given a safe-conduct across the Border. Fate was merciful to him, for, says Hume of Godscroft, 'hee lived not long after, his wound being deadly and incurable.'

In June of the same year Bannockburn was fought and won. At the battle the archers of Ettrick Forest did great work with bow and arrow, and with their steel sperthes when fortune brought them near enough their foes to give them the *coup de grâce*. Jethart axes—the iron-pointed staves from Jedburgh—were but rude weapons compared with those of the English fighters and their allies from France and Gascony, Hainault, Brittany, and Aquitaine; but that slogan of the Jedforest lads—'*Jethart's here!*' was a promise of a cruel death to many a warrior on that bloody day. A flag taken from the English at Bannockburn is still preserved as a priceless relic by the weavers of Jedburgh.

With only sixty horsemen to back him—some reinforcements were picked up on the way—the Black Douglas gave chase to King Edward, as he, with five hundred horse, fled from the battlefield. For the defeated king it was a race with death. Did a horse stumble or founder and his rider lag behind, that rider's life was forfeit. At Dunbar, Edward and

seventeen followers found refuge with the Earl of March and were sent off to Berwick in a little fishing smack. The others, with Douglas and his men still in full cry, had to push along the cliffs to Berwick. The Douglas was ever a sportsman; he 'loved better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep.' And surely no man ever hunted in circumstances better calculated to try every power of endurance than did the Black Douglas when he left one of the greatest battlefields of history after many and many an hour of fierce fighting, and rode a chase of over ninety miles, with, for royal quarry, a defeated king.

Bannockburn won, the Douglas was able to give full attention to the Borders, and to purge them of the enemies of Robert Bruce. The men of Tweeddale, Teviotdale, and Ettrick Forest had long since thrown off any semblance of allegiance to the English King, but Jedburgh and other Border towns still remained under English rule, and English raids were frequent. In 1317, while Bruce was in Ireland, the Earl of Arundel and Sir Thomas Richmond, a Yorkshire knight, deemed it a favourable time to raid the Scottish Border. In the peaceful Jed valley, at Lintalee, where the river flows through thickly wooded haughs, the Douglas had built for himself a pavilion and was laying out a park. He had made noble preparations for a house-warming, when news came to him of the near approach of the enemy.

His force consisted of fifty men-at-arms and a small body of archers, and with this he had to meet an army of ten thousand men. Arundel and Richmond had armed their soldiers with woodmen's axes in addition to their ordinary weapons, for when Douglas's little army had been annihilated, Jed Forest was to be felled down. Too long had it been a safe covert for dangerous Scots.

Carefully did the Douglas lay his plans. Long years of campaigning, when extra wits had to compensate for lack of men, had not been wasted on him. To reach Lintalee the English had to pass through a narrow glen thickly wooded, and there Douglas hid his archers. No barbed wire entanglements were known then, but he made his men bend down the 'young birk trees' (as the historian has it) and plait their tops together, so forming a net through which the enemy could not break. It was not long ere a company of Englishmen, the most heedless of gallant flies, rode straight into the web so carefully prepared for them. Nothing more dangerous could they see than scared rabbits, or a red-tailed fox scurrying into the bracken. There was no sound but the murmur of water over the stones, the whisper of the wind through the silver birches. Then suddenly the silence was shattered, and the echoes rang with the shout before which many a brave man had paled—'A Douglas! a Douglas!'

From the woods poured forth a deadly hail of arrows, and, following the arrows in their flight, burst forth men-at-arms to whom a good fight was as strong drink. The sob of dying men soon mingled with the sound of the trickling stream, and Sir Thomas Richmond lay among the dead in the glen near the river. With his own hand Douglas slew him, and carried off, as token of victory, the cap of beaver-skin that the English knight wore over his helmet. The day was won when the Douglas heard that three hundred Englishmen, unconscious of the disaster that had overtaken Richmond's detachment, were making merry at Lintalee and devouring the feast he had prepared for himself and his friends. On them, as they feasted, fell Douglas and his men, and few of the unbidden guests at that party left Lintalee. A wreath of stakes in the armorial bearings of the Douglas family is said to commemorate the birchen net that won a battle and dispersed in shameful flight the would-be hewers of the Forest.

'The Forest left tha standand still,
To hew it than tha had na will.'

In 1316 the English garrison of Berwick was sore bestead. To the hungry soldiers, death at the sword's point seemed a fate more to be desired than death from starvation. They mutinied, and on St. Valentine's Day a company of Gascons rode forth to forage across the Scottish Border. They were driving home their

spoil of cattle when the ubiquitous Douglas was upon them. He had only a few spearmen to help him to maintain his country's honour, yet so furious was this onslaught that twenty men-at-arms and sixty foot-soldiers were slain. It was the hottest encounter that Douglas ever had, so Barbour tells us, and that we may well believe, for he dealt with starving men.

It was after this exploit that Sir Robert de Nevill, known from his vanity as 'The Peacock of the North,' at Berwick swore a mighty oath. He was sick of hearing of the Black Douglas, he vowed, and next time that he saw that warrior's banner unfurled he would fight him, and trounce him most soundly. No sooner did the boast reach Douglas's ears than he and his men were off to Berwick, marching all night and giving the Peacock some light by which to see the advancing banner by setting fire to the villages that he passed. When dawn lit up the white surf on the bar at Berwick, and made the Tweed, up to Twizel, a river of gold, the defiant banner with its three silver stars on the azure field waved under the grey walls. Nevill, a man of his word, spurred out to meet his foe, with, for escort, the pick of his men-at-arms. The Douglas demanded a duel, and Nevill could not but grant it. Almost at once he fell under the Douglas's sword, his followers fled, and his three brothers were taken prisoners and ransomed afterwards for 3000 merks apiece.

Berwick was ever a town that Scots and English strove by much shedding of blood to have for their own. It was in English hands, the English governor had made himself hated by the burghers by his insolence and arrogance, and the townspeople, besieged by the Scots, were near starvation, when one of its burgesses, Patrick de Spalding by name, resolved that no longer should his town be the footstool of a bullying Englishman. To the Scottish lines he sent word that he was with them, and one night when de Spalding watched the walls, they were scaled by Douglas, Randolph, and their men, and in a few hours Berwick-on-Tweed was in Scottish hands. Furious at its loss, Edward II., with a great army, came in 1319 and laid siege to it. The garrison was much outnumbered, but even women and children helped in the warfare and carried arrows for the archers whose bows twanged from the walls. It was time to distract Edward's attention from Berwick-on-Tweed, so off to the north of England rode Douglas and Randolph, burning and plundering as they went. At Myton, near York, the Archbishop of York brought an army of four thousand to check them. With ease the Scots routed this force, driving it in such confusion before them that there were, says Hume of Godscroft, 'a thousand drowned in the water of Swail, and if the night had not come in too soon, the battell being joyned in the afternoon, few or none of them had escaped as it is

thought.' News of this defeat reached Edward at Berwick, and in terror lest the Scottish light horse might do still further harm in his own realm did they not speedily meet with a check, he raised the siege, and marched southward in undignified haste.

Some time later, papal intervention secured a truce between the two countries, but it was of short duration. There were Scottish raids and English reprisals; English forays and ugly revenges by the Scots. Who can say who struck the first blow?

In 1322 the Black Douglas and Randolph had got themselves so thoroughly disliked by the powers across the Border that three times daily at Mass were they cursed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, by all the priests in England, and by their most zealously obedient congregations. Not a curse did these two warriors care for the commination services held in their honour. Through Yorkshire they promptly came on news of the cursings, wasted as they went and brought home a great booty. Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland all paid their toll. Even to the citizens of Chester did the Douglas banner become familiar

This year's work was too much for King Edward. He could bear the Scottish insolences no longer, and levied an army of a hundred thousand to invade Scot-

land in August. To whet his appetite for revenge, Bruce and his trusty lieutenants, Douglas and Randolph, marched as far south as Preston, slaying, plundering, and burning, then turned and marched gaily home with their spoil. When the angry English King and his army were, after many delays, in battle array, it was not by force but by strategy that Bruce met him. For many miles on the line of march every head of cattle, every sack of corn, everything that the invading army could use as food, was driven or carted out of reach. To the Archbishop of Canterbury Edward wrote that he 'found neither man nor beast.' At Tranent, in East Lothian, a foraging party at length came upon one lame cow. 'Certes, it is the dearest beef I ever saw yet,' said one of Edward's generals, 'for it must have cost £1000 or more.'

The troops suffered from famine and disease. Storms beat off the provision ships which the English army wearily awaited at Leith. Three dreary days spent in Edinburgh proved too much for Edward II., who never shone as a campaigner. He sacked Holyrood, and marched south to Melrose, intending to enjoy the hospitality of the abbey there. Three hundred light horse were sent before him to get all in readiness, and received a welcome as warm as it was unexpected. The monks had a sturdy sentry, a friar on horseback armed with a spear, who was ready to give the first alarm and strike the first blow,

and not many of the three hundred who soon heard the Douglas slogan were left to greet their king when he came. 'Skirmish Hill' is the name by which the scene of the fight is still known. Edward's exasperation at his reception knew no bounds. The tale of the fighting monk had probably reached him, and his tender mercy was consequently cruel. The Prior, William de Peblis, was slain in cold blood in the dormitory, as were also an infirm monk and two blind brethren, while many other monks were mortally wounded. The army did its best to destroy the monastery, and most thoroughly pillaged it. They cast down the host from the high altar, stole the silver pyx, and marched away from the smoking desolation of Melrose Abbey to Dryburgh, where they hoped to find some plunder worth having. But at Dryburgh no provisions were to be found, and they went off disconsolately towards Berwick. Not long were they gone, however, when they heard the White Brethren pealing their bells in joy and thankfulness. It was more than they could brook. Back they came, and burned the abbey to the ground.

In the following autumn, at Byland in Yorkshire, Bruce and his generals made Edward pay handsomely for these ruined abbeys. Once more he was forced to flee ignominiously before a conquering Scottish army. In January 1327 that most unsuccessful King of England abdicated, and, almost at once, his boy

successor, Edward III., started on his first campaign, ready to avenge many a deed of violence committed by Douglas and Randolph and their raiders. It was a sorrowful campaign for the little king with his cumbrous army of nearly a hundred thousand men. Like tricky wills-o'-the-wisp the seasoned Scottish warriors led him and his army on, through marsh and hilly moorland. 'At that time,' says Froissart, 'the country called Northumberland was a savage and wild country, full of deserts and mountains.' In dismal, rainy weather, with the Tyne in spate, the English troops and their allies—John of Hainault led a contingent of two thousand five hundred German cavalry—starved, shivered, and grumbled. Neither by night nor by day were they safe from the attacks of those skilled generals, Douglas and Randolph, who pounced upon them like eagles that swoop down upon lambs from out the clouds, slew, and vanished, when it seemed as though magic alone could spirit them away. The English army had gone out with all the gorgeous panoply of war. The Scots were all light horse; the knights and squires on big bays, the rank and file on hardy hackneys that required no grooming nor special food. Their method of campaigning must have been a revelation to the hundred volunteers from the city of London —ancestors, presumably, of the gallant C.I.V.—who helped to swell the English army. Says Froissart

of the Scots: 'They take with them no purveyance of bread nor wine, for their usage and soberness is such in time of war that they will pass in the journey a great long time with flesh half sodden without bread, and drink of the river water without wine; and they neither care for pots nor pans, for they seethe beasts in their own skins. They are ever sure to find plenty of beasts in the country that they will pass through; therefore they carry with them none other purveyance, but on their horse between the saddle and the panel they truss a broad plate of metal, and behind the saddle they have a little sack full of oatmeal, to the intent that when they have eaten of the sodden flesh, then they lay this plate on the fire and temper a little of the oatmeal; and when the plate is hot, they cast off the thin paste thereon, and so make a little cake, in manner of a cracknel or biscuit, and that they eat to comfort withal their stomachs. Wherefore it is no great marvel though they make greater journeys than other people do.'

When, by a brilliant piece of strategy, the Scots broke up camp and crossed the Border just when their foes fancied that they had them safely in their hands, the English found a curious medley of things left behind. 'They found only five hundreth carcasses of red and fallow Deare, a thousand pairs of Highland showes called rullions, made of raw and

untand leather, three hundreth hides of beasts set on stakes, which served for Caldrons to seethe their meat. There were also five English men who had their legs broken, and were bound naked to trees, whom they loosed and gave them to Chirurgions to bee cured.'

The little king, it is said, burst into tears when he had to go home to his mother, feeling that by his first campaign he had only furnished sport for Douglas and his light brigade.

One year later and, for the first time in his life, Douglas, the watch-dog of the Marches, appeared as a friend to England. Peace between England and Scotland was arranged by the Treaty of Northampton, and a visible seal was put upon it by the marriage of Prince David—'Young Davy,' as an old chronicler calls him—with the Princess Joanna, sister of Edward III. The bridegroom was four: the bride had reached the mature age of six, and great and gorgeous were their wedding feasts and rejoicings at Berwick-on-Tweed. With a noble retinue 'young Davy' rode from Culross to Berwick, with halts at Lanark and Stow, a three days' ride. He must have been a sturdy little boy if he was not dead tired by the time he rode under the 'Scots' Gate.' From Berwick he and his party rode out to Coldingham Priory, and there held a feast where six bullocks were devoured. Long before the Prior and monks

of Coldingham, and Douglas and Randolph and the other knights had come to an end of eating and drinking, we can fancy little 'Davy,' wearing the fine silver chain and seal that was his father's wedding present to him, drowsily nodding on his royal chair, the voices of the revellers mingling with the crash of the sea on the rocks and the wail of the seamews on the cliffs of St. Abbs, until it all became a strange sound in a little child's dream.

The Bruce was then on his deathbed and could not come to the wedding; but when the prince returned to Culross with his little bride, 'The King made them fair welcoming,' says the chronicler. King Robert was setting his house in order. In every possible way he arranged for the welfare and prosperity of his son, his subjects, and of the country by him so hardly won, and now so dearly loved. To Prince David he wrote a letter specially commending to his care the monks of Melrose and their monastery, already nobly restored, and asking that his heart should be buried before the high altar. As dying men often do, he changed his mind before the end, and to Froissart we owe the story of his commission to the Good Lord James. As death drew near, he sent for the Black Douglas and 'for such barons and lords of his realm as he trusted best.' To Sir James—'Sir James' since he was knighted on the field of Bannockburn—he said: 'Sir James, my dear friend,

ye know well that I have had much ado in my days to uphold and sustain the right of this realm; and when I had most ado, I made a solemn vow, the which as yet I have not accomplished, whereof I am right sorry: the which was, if I might achieve and make an end of all my wars, so that I might once have brought this realm in rest and peace, then I promised in my mind to have gone and warred on Christ's enemies, adversaries to our holy Christian faith. To this purpose mine heart hath ever intended, but our Lord would not consent thereto, for I have had so much ado in my days, and now in my last enterprise I have taken such a malady that I cannot escape.' He then directed that on his death his heart should be taken from his body and embalmed, and he asked the Black Douglas, 'mine own dear especial friend,' that he would take it with him to Palestine and lay it in the Holy Sepulchre, 'where our Lord lay.' 'Then all the lords that heard these words wept for pity, and when this knight, Sir James Douglas, might speak for weeping, he said, "Ah, gentle and noble king, a hundred times I thank your Grace of the great honour that ye do to me, since of so noble and great treasure ye give me the charge, and, sir, I shall do with a glad heart all that ye have commanded me, to the best of my true power; howbeit I am not worthy nor sufficient to achieve such a noble enterprise." Then the king said, "Ah, gentle knight, I thank you, so

that ye will promise to do it." "Sir," said the knight, "I shall do it undoubtedly, by the faith that I owe to God and to the order of knighthood." "Then I thank you," said the king, "for now shall I die in more ease of my mind, since I know that the most worthy and sufficient knight of my realm shall achieve for me that which I could never attain unto." ' On June 7, 1329, when sunny mornings must have carried the Bruce's thoughts back to that midsummer day at Bannockburn, the sufferings that he had borne so unflinchingly came to an end. 'There was no way with him but death,' says Froissart. 'He was, beyond all living men of his day, a valiant knight,' says another chronicler.

In February 1330 the Black Douglas, with a noble company, set sail for the Holy Land. The heart of Bruce, in a silver casket cunningly enamelled, he bore round his neck by a string of silk and gold. In Spain he stopped, and at Seville received a princely welcome from Alfonso of Castile and his court. One famed Spanish warrior, his face scarred with many an old wound, looked with surprise at the Douglas's smooth brown face.

'Ye have been in so many fights,' said he; 'how comes this miracle, that you have escaped with never a scar?'

'Praised be God!' said Douglas, 'I always had hands to defend my head.'

The King of Castile and the Moors of Granada were then at war, and it was not possible for a knight of the stamp of James Douglas to sail on without drawing his sword against the Paynim in the cause of a Christian King—

> '"Now shame it were," cried good Lord James,
> "Shall never be said of me,
> That I and mine have turned aside
> From the Cross in jeopardie.
> Have down, have down, my merry men all—
> Have down unto the plain;
> We'll let the Scottish lion loose
> Within the fields of Spain!"'

On August 25, 1330, the Spanish army met the Moors in battle.

The advance was sounded, and Douglas, mistaking it for a general attack, galloped forward with his men in furious charge. 'Allah! illah! Allah!' came the fierce cry from many a Saracen throat.

'A Douglas! a Douglas!' shouted the men of the Border. Outnumbered and surrounded by the Saracens, the fiercest fighters then on earth, and with no backing from their Spanish allies, the Douglas and his followers had no chance. Yet with the supreme luck that was ever his own, even from that dire fight Douglas might have escaped had he not seen his friend, Sir William St. Clair of Roslin, in sore peril, and pressed forward to help him. On every side of him were the swarthy faces of the Moslems,

around him his bravest men lay slain. Far, far away was the valley of Yarrow, the peaceful tower up the Douglas Burn. Many a less worthy Borderer since his day has seen, as death laid upon him a compelling hand, the 'sedate, serious, broad-shouldered Border hills'; has heard the song, as of a soothing mother voice, of Tweed and Ettrick and Yarrow.

'Allah! il' Allah!' triumphantly came the war-cry of the bloodthirsty host.

There was for him, as for the Bruce, 'no way but death.' Before him, where the fight was fiercest, he cast the precious relic of his king and comrade. 'Pass first in fight, as thou wert wont to do!' he cried. 'Douglas will follow thee or die!'

They found him lying dead on the field where the slain were thickest—in death, as in life, sheltering with his body the heart of his friend.

In St. Bride's Church of Douglas, Lord James, 'in his day a brave hammerer of the English,' now lies at rest; and at Melrose, where once stood the high altar of the abbey that he loved, there rests the heart of a king.

Like a great storm the War of Independence had swept over Scotland. One hundred and thirty-seven castles north of the Cheviots were destroyed by Robert the Bruce after the death of Edward I. Scotland had won her freedom; she had tasted power. More than that, she had tasted blood, and on the

Border it was a thirst that for many a year to come was never satiated. Almost did it seem as though upon the people of that hilly land there had fallen the curse: 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.'

## CHAPTER VII

### THE REIVERS

O they rade in the rain, in the days that are gane,
In the rain and the wind and the lave.
They shoutit in the ha' and they routit on the hill,
But they 're a' quaitit noo in the grave.

R. L. Stevenson.

In all times, and even in these prosaic twentieth-century days of ours, when we are told that Romance is dead, and that dull, hard-headed Utilitarianism reigns in her stead, Courage and Lawlessness (so frequently the disreputable companion of Courage) are things that seldom fail to find a responsive echo in the heart of youth. The doings of Robin Hood, the reckless bravery of the gentlemen of the road, are always popular themes. In our Australian colonies we find that the bushranger has never been without his admirers. And on our own Scottish Border we have to acknowledge that, although youth may be left far behind us, there is no period in our history that appeals to us more, because it still can make our blood run faster, still can give the echo of the jingle of spurs, the lowing of kye—can let us see the moss-troopers driving home their spoil in the 'lee licht o'

the mune,'—than the most reckless, most law-defying time of all Border history, the years of the reign of the Border reiver. The reiver fought hard, drank hard, loved as he fought and drank. He was as good and true a friend as he was a fierce and bitter enemy. He was never one to turn his cheek to the smiter, but rarely did he turn his back on a follower or a friend. Shamed was a whole clan when one of its name broke faith with friend or with foe. The injured man had only to ride to the first Border meeting and, glove on lance-point, proclaim aloud the baseness of a broken word. Quickly the clan saw to it, and the blood of the perjurer wiped out the stain on a gallant name.

To the arm-chair critic, that may seem a time of misdirected chivalry, of brave deeds wrongly done, of breaches of all the commandments of God and of man. Yet there is surely no true son of the Border who, in his inmost heart, is not proud when he can claim descent from one of those who raided the Marches in the long-ago days.

On the Scottish Border there was never a time when England ceased to be regarded as an enemy. As long as that blue line of Cheviots was in sight, Scot and Englishman hated one another, and it was the Borderer's part never to allow Scotland's 'auld enemy' to forget that the Scots were an independent nation, their country a free land.

In 1593 when, ostensibly, there was peace between the two countries, Sir Robert Carey, English governor of Berwick, writes: 'We have no prison here but *Haddocke's Hole*, a very bad prison, only for thieves and murtherers; a very loathesome place.' But he had no scruple in committing to Haddocke's Hole the master of a boat laden with salt, for no other crime than for being a Scot and for taking a walk round the walls. He pried and looked 'verie circumspeclie as he walked,' says Carey, who further adds that his intention is to keep him in prison until the powers that be in London shall decide his fate—'for he was very brave and stout with the officers that took him.' To Haddocke's Hole also were committed the Scottish 'pledges,' reivers of good family from the valleys of Teviot and Tweed and Liddel—Pringles, Rutherfurds, Elliots, Armstrongs, and others—after some of their number had broken ward from prison at York. 'Thieves and murtherers' all, were they in English eyes.

Who can wonder that, even so late as in 1811, a favourite game of Northumbrian boys was one called 'Beggarly Scot,'—a game of reiving and fighting and imprisonment and fierce retaliation. And, to this day, as long as the Cheviots are within hail, national animosity seems to find a place in the hearts of those whom years have still to teach the true meaning of the title 'Great Britain,' and the pride of Empire.

In Edinburgh and farther north, when David of Scotland had married an English queen, and the Treaty of Northampton had apparently promised a perpetual amnesty, men might have a chance of believing themselves to be at peace with England. From Solway sands to where Tweed joins the sea, there was never such a chance. There were constant little explosions of national feeling, leading to bloodshed on lonely moor or in silent valley, or to shameful death at Carlisle or in Edinburgh.

In later days ' Border thieves ' was the name given to the raiders, yet there can be no doubt that the Scot who risked his life by riding over the Border to despoil the English had, originally, not only the gratification of securing for himself and his countrymen much-needed loot, but felt also an ennobling glow of real patriotism. He was spoiling the Egyptians, striking a blow at the hated enemy of the country that he loved. As he and his men rode up the Rede valley or crossed the Carter on their homeward way, they could feel that there were two or three fewer Englishmen left in the world, and, for the English, certainly less worldly wealth. With patriotism as a mainspring, reiving became a profession to which not only no shame attached, but which brought much credit in the event of a successful raid. Hence it is that for the records of the chief Border families one must go not to the pages of Burke and Debrett, but

to Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*. No true Borderer would ever blush to own that, as one of his quarterings, he might bear a gallows rampant.

A crescent of stars appears in many a Border coat of arms. *Reparabit Cornua Phœbe*, 'We 'll have moonlight again,' is the motto, freely construed, of the house of Harden; *Luna Cornua Reparabit*, 'The moon will replenish our coffers,' that of Buccleuch; and *Crescendo Prosim*, 'May I do good as the moon rises,' is the equally suggestive one of the old house of the Scotts of Sinton. Border cavaliers of those days were indeed 'gentlemen of the night, minions of the moon.' Says Scott of Satchells, worthy son of a brave Border house, and gallant defender of the freebooting clan of which he was proud to be a member:—

'For all Frontiers, and Borders, I observe,
Wherever they lie, are Free-booters,
And does the enemy much more harms,
Than fifteen thousand marshal-men in arms;
The Free-booters venture both life and limb,
Good wife and bairn, and every other thing;
He must do so, or else must starve and die;
For all his lively-hood comes of the enemie:
His substance, being, and his house most tight,
Yet he may chance to lose all in a night;
Being driven to poverty, he must needs a free-booter be,
Yet for vulgar calumnies there is no remedie:
An arrant liar calls a free-booter a thief,
A free-booter may be many a man's relief:
A free-booter will offer no man wrong,
Nor will take none at any hand;

He spoils more enemies now and then,
Than many hundreds of your marshal-men:
Near to a border frontier in time of war,
There 's ne'er a man but he 's a free-booter.'

Up the valleys, up the 'hopes,' and the glens of the Border, we find the roofless ruins of the peel towers that were the reivers' strongholds, like lonely sentinels watching for the approach of a danger that has long since ceased to be.

They are chiefly three-storied: the upper stories, with their slits for windows and wide chimneys where jackdaws and starlings now have their nests, containing the little living-rooms of their owners, while the lowest story furnished a byre for the cattle in wintry weather or in dangerous times. The barmkyn, a surrounding thick wall enclosing a large courtyard in front of the tower, had a strong outer door of oak studded with broad-headed nails, and an innermost one of grated iron, fit to withstand the assaults of an importunate enemy, and outside this were the cottages of the retainers. Cattle below, glassless windows that let in little sunlight—competent ventilators only when winter winds drove the sleet before them, seeking access at every chink and taking no refusal—the peel towers strike us now as being the stuffiest and most unfragrant of baronial halls. Yet from these window slits and from the bartizan, or from the flat roof of the tower, the dwellers

could look across heather-purpled moor and hill. The shrill of the whaup, the wail of the pewit, and the crow of the grouse were almost the only sounds to break the peace of their solitude, save when the lowing of driven cattle and clatter of horses' hoofs told of the successful return from a raid. From their peels those reivers and their folk could watch the wildfowl winging their way from reedy marsh to lonely loch, and could see in the sunlight the silver glint of rivers that murmured their song under the great trees of primeval forest. And if the windows were too tiny to admit of much of the scent of heather, bog myrtle, and bracken ascending to the living-rooms of the tower, some of the freshness of the glorious uplands was yet to be found in the rooms which had for a carpet the sweet, benty grass of the moor, boughs of the birch, or rushes from the burnside, mingled with wild thyme, heather, or the fragrant yellow bedstraw. When the Black Douglas and the Bishop of St. Andrews visited Robert the Bruce at his royal castle at Tarbet, the sum of 2s. 2d. was what it cost him for birchen boughs with which to strew the chamber floors of his guests.

If the peel towers and Border castles had more the appearance of fortresses than of residences of men of family, this was only natural. For many centuries, from long before the reign of Bruce, until 'King Jamie' had long time been ruler of the two kingdoms, those who lived within riding distance from England

could have had no more sense of security than a man might have whose house was built within reach of the tides of a turbulent sea. During Elizabeth's reign a proposal with regard to the refortification of the old Roman Wall—'The Pightes Wall . . . which was made by the Romaynes'—was seriously considered by the queen and her ministers. Nothing short of that would have stemmed—if, indeed, that would have stemmed it—the constant, almost daily invasion that for months and years went steadily on. It must have been impossible in those times for any woman on either side of the Border to retire to bed without the consciousness that her slumbers might be rudely broken into by midnight alarums and excursions. On both sides of the Border constant vigilance was necessary to keep Scots and English reivers peaceably on their own side of the Cheviots. Sentinels, usually accompanied by bloodhounds, were posted night and day at certain passes on the English side. By Border law a raider might be pursued for six days into the opposite kingdom—hunted 'hot-trod,' with bloodhounds and sounding of hunting horns, and with the pursuers carrying lighted pieces of turf on their spears' points—and punished there and then at the discretion of the captors.

'On darksome night,
In fierce Hot-trod, with panting breath,
Men press'd the reiver in his track,
And left him done to bloody death.'

On the top of almost every peel—by Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1455—was an iron basket holding the bale[1] fire, or need-fire; and on many a hill was yet another form of beacon, 'a long and strong tree, set up with a long iron pole across the head of it, and an iron brander fixed on the stalk in the middle of it for holding a tar barrel.' By day and by night the silent signal could be sent speeding along the Border with all the rapidity of a telegram. A cloud of black smoke by day, red flames at night, would arm and mount every fighting man of Tweeddale and Teviotdale, of Ettrick and of Yarrow, and of all the valleys and glens of the Border. As many as ten thousand armed men have mustered at daybreak at a single meeting-place.

There is in Liddesdale a tradition that the first person who discovered the approach of the English had to cover a bush or tree on some rising ground with a white cloth or sheet. Like the beacon signal, this signal was also repeated and repeated until those snowy patches had passed on the news to all the fighting men of Liddesdale.

When the signal of invasion was given from peel tower or from hill top, the neighbouring peasantry had the right to seek shelter for themselves, their families, their 'kye,' and any portable possessions

[1] Anglo-Saxon, *bael*, funeral pile; *nyd*, force, *fyr*, fire. Originally fire produced by the friction of two pieces of wood.

IN LIDDESDALE

that they held dear, within the walls of the nearest castle or peel. At Bamborough the approach of the Scots meant the flight of the villagers with their cattle and all their worldly goods up the steep cliff road to the castle of their feudal lord. Even the beams of their houses they carried with them, for constant 'herschips' and burnings meant that wood became a rather scarce and valuable commodity.

Had it been only from the hands of English monarchs that the Scottish raiders had to expect the punishment of their lawless deeds, their lives had been better worth a purchase than they actually were. But while, in times of war, the Borderer was found by Scottish rulers to be a most useful instrument for keeping up a constant state of irritation between the two countries, in times of peace—so-called—the Borderer was a convenient scapegoat. Had England's dignity been insulted, had the peace and safety of a gracious English monarch's faithful subjects been endangered, then there was bloody justice dealt on the Borderer who had dared to affront the friend and cousin of the Scottish king. 'Jethart Justice,' hanging first, trial afterwards, was the phrase, now a proverb, originally used when Jedburgh first saw a batch of moss-troopers summarily put to death to maintain the peace of nations. But a hanging in the morning did not, as a rule, lead to immediate amendment of conduct on the part of the survivors

of the clan. Were moon and weather favourable for a foray, some law-abiding lieges of England or of Scotland were made that very night to pay for the deaths of the dead raiders. 'The Borderers were, in truth,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'during the time of peace, a kind of outcasts, against whom the united powers of England and Scotland were often employed. Hence, the men of the Borders had little attachment to their monarchs, whom they termed in derision, the Kings of Fife and Lothian; provinces which they were not legally entitled to inhabit, and which, therefore, they pillaged with as little remorse as if they belonged to a foreign country.' Every now and again, through the centuries, a royal hand would be raised in menace against the Borderers, and unless there was a rapid check from within to their forays and fightings (and but rarely did that come about), the menace was followed by a punitive expedition. In 1510 the clan Turnbull had kicked over all traces, and by night-march James IV. arrived unexpectedly at Jedburgh. Willy nilly the clan had to appear before the king up their valley of the Rule, and there two hundred of them, naked swords in their hands, but each with a halter round his neck, had to cry *Peccavi*. Some were hanged there and then, many were imprisoned, and the rest were solemnly bound over to keep the peace.

The hunting expedition of James IV.'s successor,

James v., when he had for quarry some of the most gallant Scots on the Border, has been commemorated by more than one of the ballads. In the year 1530 James felt that he must lay hold of the more turbulent spirits on the Border with a firm hand. The lords of Buccleuch, Bothwell, Ker, Home, Maxwell, and other Border chiefs, he put in prison as causes of disquietude in the regions they reigned over. With a force of eight thousand men he took his way from Edinburgh to Yarrow, where he allayed the suspicions of the reivers by hunting in Meggatdale. 'Aughteine scoir of deir' were slain, and that in the month of June, when no true sportsman would have hunted harts on whose horns the velvet was still thick and tender. Much small game also fell to his hawks, and the march went triumphantly on by what is still known as the King's Road, from St. Mary's Loch, past the Loch o' the Lowes, into Ettrick, and on into Teviotdale by way of Bellenden Moor. Ballad and tradition tell us that in Yarrow the royal hunter turned aside at Henderland Tower to hang a noted freebooter, Cockburn of Henderland, over his own gate. Near the ruins of the Tower, where a brawling mountain burn rushes through the rocky 'Dow Linn,' and falls down for twenty feet, there is still pointed out the 'Lady's Seat' where, so they say, the lady of Henderland fled to escape the sight of her husband's murder; and the 'Border Widow's Lament' tells the

tale of her piteous loneliness and of her broken heart.

'I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed and whiles I sat;
I digg'd a grave, and laid him in,
And happ'd him wi' the sod sae green.

. . . . .

Nae living man I 'll lo'e again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain,
Wi' ae lock of his yellow hair
I 'll chain my heart for evermair.'

Near the Tower of Henderland is a large stone graven with a cross, sword, and shield. 'Here lyis Perys de Cokburne and hys wife Marjory' is the inscription, and in the minds of the country-folk there is no doubt that the stone marks the grave of the betrayed reiver and his widow. The historical records that the raider's name was William, that he was not hanged but beheaded, and that his execution took place in Edinburgh, are provoking facts to true lovers of romance.

From Henderland, tradition also tells us, the royal hunting party passed on to Tushielaw, there to seize 'Adie Scot of Tuschielaw,' known as 'The King of Thieves,' and hang him on his own 'Hanging Tree,' an old ash which, until recent years, still withstood wind and weather. Here, again, solid fact interferes with romance, for his hanging tree had already borne its last crop of ripe fruit, and Adam Scott had been

tried and beheaded in Edinburgh and his head stuck up to bleach on the Tolbooth a month before the raid of the king.

If James v. was King of Fife and the Lothians, and if the Marches were ruled by nobles whose sway was almost royal, there was then a monarch on the Border whose kingship was no empty title, and whose crown had not been lightly won. Johnny Armstrong was, indeed, a raider, but he was one who fought for his country as well as for his own pocket and his own clan, nor did he bow the knee to any man save to his rightful sovereign, James, King of Scots. Again and again had the English suffered at his hand. His name carried terror with it to those on the English side. With Johnny and his men barring the entrance-gate to Scotland there was no possibility of any English force compelling its way through that south-western corner of the Border. Nor was it only in his special portion of the Debateable Land, where the gaunt brown gables of his castle of Gilnockie still look down over the trees on the Esk as it swiftly flows by, that Johnny was a potentate. As far as Newcastle he levied his tribute, and Border Scots honoured, Englishmen feared, his name. To the best of his light he was an honest man. His code of honour was the code of the aristocratic reiver. England was the enemy of himself, his country, and his king. England must and should, accordingly, suffer. What he did,

he did openly and magnificently. There was no concealment of the blackmail which was one of the chief sources of his revenue. To those who acknowledged his supremacy and paid for what was obviously well worth paying for, he graciously accorded his royal protection. They were immune from his assaults and those of all others. Those who were foolish enough to combat his rights had also to pay the price. By the English Wardens Johnny Armstrong was, naturally, regarded as a most vicious source of danger to themselves and to their countrymen, and so constant were the tales of his shedding of blood and his arrogant successes, that his sovereign at Edinburgh felt that steps must be taken to assert his own royal authority. Lord Dacre, the English Warden, was with James v. when he and his eight thousand followers rode into Eskdale to hunt big game, and take by craft a king of the reivers. At Caerlanrig, where were then a chapel and a hamlet, but where the whaup now wails up desolate valleys, the camp was pitched. The king had let it be understood that all broken men who should come into his camp and make submission to him should have indemnity, and to Armstrong himself came messengers with a letter written by the king's own hand, telling him how cordially welcomed he should be were he to present himself. Apparently treachery on the part of his lawful liege never entered into the mind of Johnny Armstrong,

ever wary and prepared for double dealing where an enemy was concerned. Elliots and Armstrongs alike felt proud of the honour done to their chief, and a gallant company of fifty Border gentlemen, with Johnny at their head, rode to the royal camp by the Frostly Burn to assure their king of their allegiance, and to beg him to accept the hospitality of Gilnockie Tower. The 'jackes, steil capps, speares, gunis, lance stalfes, and dagges, swordes and daggers' with which the reivers were accustomed to arm themselves—for even the herds then watched their flocks wearing an iron jack, and with pike in hand—were laid aside. Unarmed and in 'gorgeous apparrell' did the King of the Border and his friends come to do honour to their sovereign. How many English wardrobes had contributed to the splendour of the raiders' appearance it would be ungracious to inquire, for their mode of showing confidence was a gracious one indeed. Through Langholm rode Johnny and his men—

> 'The ladies luikit frae their loft windows—
> God bring our men weel home again!'

But their future was in the lap of the gods, and never home came they. Through the steep gorges where bracken and heather still grow they passed, and somewhere near where the farmhouse of Linhope now stands large bodies of horsemen dashed down from many an ambush in the hills and closed in on

them on every side. It was a menacing escort that King James had sent to his courteously invited guests. The magnificence of their appearance when they reached the camp only did more to inflame their monarch's ire.

'What wants that knave that a king should have?' he wrathfully demanded, and 'bade take that tyrant out of his sight.' Unarmed was Johnny, yet he possessed the weapon that the reivers used last of all—the Borderer's eloquent tongue. He saw that the king meant death to be his portion, and skilfully did he plead his cause. But his proffered bribes—even the offer of four-and-twenty of his kinsmen to serve the king while life should last—all only served to confirm James v. in his decision. He had come to do Johnny to death, and nothing was going to deprive him of so magnificent a quarry.

'"Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out o' my sight soon may'st thou be!
I grantit never a traitor's life,
And now I'll not begin wi' thee."

"Ye lied, ye lied, now King," he says,
"Altho' a King and Prince ye be!
For I've luved naething in my life,
I weel dare say it, but honesty—

Save a fat horse, and a fair woman,
Twa bonny dogs to kill a deir;
But England suld have found me meal and mault,
Gif I had lived this hundred yeir!

She suld have found me meal and mault,
And beef and mutton in a plentie;
But never a Scots wyfe could have said
That e'er I skaith'd her a puir flee.

To seek het water beneith cauld ice,
Surely it is a great folie—
I have asked grace at a graceless face,
But there is nane for my men and me!

. . . . . .

Had I my horse, and harness gude,
And riding as I wont to be,
It suld have been tauld this hundred yeir,
The meeting of my King and me!"'

Grace at a graceless face it was in truth, and the ballad tells the remainder of the ugly tale—

'John murdered was at Carlinrigg,
And all his gallant companie:
But Scotland's heart was ne'er so wae,
To see sae mony brave men die—

Because they saved their country deir
Frae Englishmen! Nane were sa bauld
Whyle Johnie lived on the Border syde,
Nane of them durst come near his hauld.'

Johnny Armstrong and forty-seven of his followers were hanged on the ash-trees by the camp; one of them, 'Sandy Scott, a prowd thieff,' was burned alive, because it was proved that he had set fire to a poor widow's house and that some of her children had perished in the flames. And, says a chronicler, 'the English people were exceeding glad when they understood that Johnny Armstrong was executed.'

Treacherously and shamefully did King James thus slay one of his most loyal friends, and the lonely place where Johnny Armstrong perished is regarded as the martyrs' graves are regarded even to this day.

According to country tradition the ash-trees gave silent protest against the burdens that royal treachery had forced them to bear, by withering long before their time—

> 'The trees on which the Armstrongs dee'd
> Wi' summer leaves were gay,
> But lang afore the harvest tide
> They withered a' away.'

There was many a martyr besides Johnny Armstrong to his convictions of what was fit and proper in the old raiding days. Some thirty-eight years after King James's raid, another raid was made on the Border, this time by the Regent Moray. Scotts, Elliots, and Armstrongs had come from Deloraine, the Dodhead, Stobs, Branxholm Mains, and many another farm in Liddesdale and Borthwick Water, to Hawick Market, and were there peaceably selling their cattle and sheep. But the Regent and his men were upon them before they had time to realise wherein they had offended. Fifty-three of them were made prisoners, twenty-two of these, 'for lacke of trees and halters,' were drowned there and then in the Teviot. Six were hanged in Edinburgh and the remainder imprisoned.

In 1608 the Earl of Dunbar, his gracious Majesty's Commissioner in Scotland, hanged one hundred and forty of those whom he designated 'the nimblest and most powerful' of the reivers, but all in vain. The survivors went on with the dance.

If their fellow-countrymen had cause to dread the visits of the reivers, one can well understand the respect in which century after century they were held by their English neighbours. Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., who visited Scotland in the reign of James I., describes his stay at a farmhouse near Berwick on his way north, and relates that at two A.M. the host and the family priest hastily rose from the supper table. They were, they explained, going to a distant keep—probably Norham—'for fear of the Scots, who for purposes of plunder were in the habit of crossing the river at ebb tide during the night.' The harmony of the evening being thus rudely disturbed, Æneas Sylvius begged that he might be allowed to accompany his host, and the ladies of the party were also urgent in their entreaties not to be left behind to make a Scottish holiday. But the owner of the farm and his priest were obdurate, and rode off leaving the future Pope in possession, and with him for company about one hundred women, two men-servants, and his own guide. They sat round the fire, the women cleansing hemp, and carrying on a lively conversation through the guide,

who interpreted, until the night was nearly over, when the fierce barking of dogs and the cackling of geese scattered the company in wild confusion. Æneas Sylvius was hiding in a stable when there was brought to him the welcome news that it was a false alarm.

Whatever other causes of complaint against the Scottish freebooters the English might have, they had but seldom to complain of the maltreatment of their women, as one is glad to know on reading of the ungallant desertion of the women in the report of Æneas Sylvius. Only very rarely, in the records of crime on the Marches, do we read of women being taken prisoners for the sake of the ransom, or for any other reason. More rarely still is there a tale of any woman being slain in any of those Border skirmishes. Almost the only instances are those of the aged Lady of Buccleuch, who, in October 1548, was burned to death in her tower of Catslack, up Yarrow, by English raiders, and of the woman who was slain at Newark by the same party, commanded by Lord Grey, the English Warden. Of course, as is ever the case in hostile countries, one has complaints from Scots and from English of the glaring misconduct of the other side. Presumably, therefore, a Scottish Bill presented to the Lords Commissioners of England in 1597 may be based on exaggerated statements. According to the complainers, Scrope,

the English Warden, led in the beginning of August 1596 an army of two thousand men, 'for the most part the Queen's waged men,' into Liddesdale, and took prisoners. The men they took were coupled two and two together 'in a leashe like doggis,' while sixty to eighty women and children were stripped 'of their clothis and sarkis' and left naked, 'exposit to the injurie of wind and weather, whereby nyne or tenne infants perished within eight daies thereafter.' This complaint was received by the English Commissioners with the greatest incredulity. They suggested that the Liddesdale unfortunates had magnified a hundred soldiers into a thousand. As to nine or ten children perishing in 'the greatest hete of summer' they would have none of it.

But however impartially one may strive to view the case, one has to own that the Borderers on the south side of the Tweed were little, if at all, behind the Scottish reivers in their devotion to what might be regarded as a hereditary profession. In Cumberland it was customary to lay a sword on the table when the provisions were nearing an end; and 'Ride, Rowley, ride! Hough's in the pot!' is a still existing proverb, keeping green the memory of a Lady Graeme of Netherby, who urged on her son Roland to replenish the larder with some Scottish beef or black-faced mutton. On the Scottish side delicate hints were also given. There is still in the possession of Lord

Polwarth, head of the Scott clan, the spurs which, so says tradition, were dished, clean and well burnished, at table by the lady of 'Wat o' Harden,' at times when she felt that it would be well for her menu's sake if her husband took a moonlight ride.

By the ruling powers there was certainly never much done to increase the spirit of friendship between English and Scottish Borderers. Amongst other items in the English 'Remedy for Border Decays,' issued in August 1597, it was ordained '*That it be March treason for a Borderer, man or woman, to intermarry with Scots borderers.*'

In the eyes of the *petits maîtres* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who had not come into close contact with the men of the Marches, a Borderer was only another name for the very worst type of brigand. The Earl of Cork and Orrery refers to them in his preface to Cary's *Memoirs*, as 'those Ostrogoths, the Borderers, a set of wild men, who, from the time when the Romans left our island, till the death of Queen Elizabeth, kept the southern part of Scotland and the northern part of England in a perpetual civil war, and seem to have equalled the Caffres in the trade of stealing, and the Hottentots in ignorance and brutality.'

John Lesly, Bishop of Ross, wrote of his countrymen, the Borderers, as though he spoke of those of another nation. 'They reckon it a great disgrace,

and the part of a mean person,' he says, 'for any one to make a journey on foot, whence it follows that they are mostly all horsemen. . . . They take great pleasure in their own music, and in their rhythmical songs, which they compose upon the exploits of their ancestors, or in their own ingenious stratagems in plundering, or their artificial defences when taken. Besides, they think the art of plundering so very lawful, that they never say over their prayers more fervently, or have more devout recurrence to the beads of their rosaries, than when they have made an expedition, as they frequently do, of forty or fifty miles for the sake of booty. They leave their frontiers in the night time in troops, going through impassable places, and through many a bye-path. All the day time they refresh themselves and their horses in hiding places chosen beforehand, till they arrive in the dark at those places they have a design upon. Having seized their booty, they return home in the night, in like manner, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilled a leader is to pass through those dreary places, crooked turnings, and deep precipices, in the thickest mists and darkness, the greater is his honour and reputation for ingenuity. With such secrecy can they proceed, that they very rarely have their booty taken from them, unless when, by the help of bloodhounds, following them exactly upon the track, they may

chance to fall into the hands of their adversaries. But if they are taken, their eloquence is so powerful, and the sweetness of their language so winning, that they even can move both judges and accusers, however severe before, if not to mercy, at least to admiration and compassion.' 'They know no measure of law,' says Camden, 'but the length of their swords,' yet even their English enemies had to own that although the Scottish Borderers had peculiar notions regarding the rights of property, certain virtues were theirs. 'Their word was as true as steel,' writes Sir Ralph Sadler, 'and though they would plunder without compunction, yet would they never betray any man who trusted in them for all the gold in France or Scotland.' 'I do assure you,' says the Earl of Surrey, writing to Wolsey of the Border chiefs in 1523, 'they are the boldest men and the hottest that ever I saw in any nation.'

Not even the interference of spiritual authorities would make them change their ways—notwithstanding the fact that amongst the reiving clans Roman Catholicism died hard. In 1524 and 1525 the Scottish and English reivers of Tynedale and Redesdale were excommunicated by the Archbishop of Glasgow and the Bishop of Durham. With most flesh-creeping and all-embracing curses were they cursed: 'I CURSE thaim gaungand, and I CURSE thaim rydand; I CURSE thaim standand, and I CURSE thaim sittand; I CURSE

thaim etand, and I CURSE thaim drinkand; I CURSE thaim walkand, and I CURSE thaim sleepand,' and so on—a highly elaborated and most skilfully particularised service of commination. 'And, finally, I CONDEMN thaim perpetualie to the deip pit of hell, to remain with Lucifeir and all his fallowis, and thair bodies to the gallowis of the Burrow Mure, first to be hangit, syne revin and ruggit with doggis, swyne and utheris wyld beists, abhominable to all the warld.' But the reivers as little valued these ecclesiastical threats to their souls as the threats to their bodies. A Scottish friar was prevailed upon to administer the Communion to them, 'of his facion,' and they snapped their irreverent fingers in the faces of the Archbishop and the predecessor of 'little Tobie of Durham.'

With the idea of keeping law and order in the most troublesome portions of the two kingdoms, the country on either side of the Cheviots had been divided into three Marches, ruled over by Wardens appointed by their several governments. On the Eastern March of Scotland the Homes held rule, and, probably owing to the proximity of the garrison at Berwick, had a slightly less arduous task than the Wardens of the other Marches. The Western March was in the unhappy position of being a prey for which the rival houses of Maxwell and of Johnston were at constant warfare, and which was given to one family,

then to another, as suited the passing caprice of king or councillors. The Middle March was probably the choicest hunting-ground for the true-bred reiver, for from thence he had a choice of three Marches, all most equally possible of access. The Elliots and Armstrongs of Liddesdale were said to be 'always riding,' and no whit behind them were the men of Teviotdale—Rutherfurds, Burnes, Douglases, Turnbulls, Croziers, and many others. As for the clan Scott, they had catholic tastes in their English forays. East, west, north and south was all the same to them, in spite of the fact that as Warden of Liddesdale, an extra Wardenship presumably created by the exigencies of the case, a Scott of Buccleuch most frequently held office. The Middle March was ruled by the Kers—now by a Ker of Cessford, and again by a Ker of Fernihirst, head of the rival house. Perhaps the raiders' palmiest days were those when young Ker of Cessford ruled for his father, while his brother-in-law, Buccleuch—after the fall of Bothwell—was keeper of Liddesdale. Those were the days of Wat o' Harden, of Kinmont Willie, of Geordie Bourne of infamous repute, of a gallant host of freebooters whose memory still is green.

Scott of Harden in Liddesdale and of Kirkhope and Oakwood in the Ettrick Valley, still known and loved as 'Auld Wat,' was a descendant from the house of Sinton, and married Mary Scott of

Dryhope, known as the 'Flower of Yarrow'—a beautiful woman, and one who had, according to Sir Walter, 'a curious hand at pickling the beef he stole.' A family of six sons and six daughters was theirs, and, in addition, tradition tells us that Lady Harden brought up as her adopted son a lad who, as a handsome little boy, was brought back by the Scotts from a raid into Cumberland. One fancies he may have had something to say in the conception of Roland Graeme in the brain of Auld Wat's great descendant, but he was not a fighting man like Roland, nor like Auld Wat and his stalwart sons, but a minstrel. He, it is said, was the 'Minstrel Burne,' who sang of 'Leader Haughs and Yarrow,' and to him, also, is attributed both words and music of many of the Border ballads. A strange product of the English side must he have seemed to Auld Wat, who habitually wrote his name with the sword, and of the pen knew nothing whatever.

Wat's sons were men after his own heart, and it must have been a hard blow to him when Walter, his second son, was slain by the Scotts of Gilmanscleugh in a fray that began at a hunting match. To arms flew the dead man's five brothers. But Auld Wat was a prudent father; promptly he deprived them of their weapons, locked them up in one of the dungeons of his tower, hurried off to Edinburgh, and there stated his case. The lands of Gilmanscleugh were at once declared to be forfeit and given as compensation

to the bereaved parent. Back to Harden with the charter he galloped, and released his prisoners. 'To horse, lads!' he cried, 'and let us take possession! The lands o' Gilmanscleugh are well worth a dead son.'

In spite of the occasional appearance of a dish of spurs, not often did Wat o' Harden's livestock come so low as on the shameful occasion when he heard a herd refer to 'Wat o' Harden's coo.' '*Harden's coo!*' said the affronted Wat. 'Is 't come to that? By my faith, they 'll sune say Harden's *kye*!'

Boot and saddle was at once the word for Wat and his men. The English side had a visit from them that night, and 'a bow of kye and a bassened bull' were driven home to Harden early next morning.

'I swear by the light of the Michaelmas moon
And the might of Mary high,
And by the edge of my braidsword brown,
They shall soon say Harden's kye.

. . . . .

The Michaelmas moon had entered then,
And ere she wan the full,
Ye might see by her light in Harden glen
A bow o' kye and a bassened bull.'

It was, they say, on his homeward ride that he passed an extra big haystack and eyed it wistfully. 'By my saul,' he said, 'had ye but fower

feet, ye shouldna stand lang there!' Not much that was worth taking did Wat leave behind him when he went a-reiving. In June 1596 there is a record of a moonlight ride to Cumberland, in company with 'Will Elliot of Larreston,' 'the young laird of Whithaugh,' and sixty men, from whence he brought back '300 kye and oxen, 20 horses and mares, spoil of 2 houses, golde money and insight, worth 100£ stg.' In August of the same year he and young Whithaugh —evidently a purposeful youth—with 'John and Gib Ellotts, sons to Martine,' and four hundred men, paid a visit by day to some Armstrongs and others, Queen Elizabeth's tenants in Gilsland, 'arrayed in the most warlike manner.' Behind them, when they returned homewards, they left twenty burning houses and many wounded men, and, as a memento of their visit, they took with them gold money and 'apperrell, etc.,' worth £400, three hundred kye and oxen, twenty horses, and various other little unconsidered trifles that might prove useful to their wives. To Cecil, in July 1597, Lord Eure, Warden of the Middle March, wrote in bitterness of spirit. Wat o' Harden, with other Teviotdale lairds, and a gallant company of moss-troopers, had 'brake a day forray a myle beneathe Bellinghame, spoiled the townesmen in Bellinghame, brake the crosse,' and gone 'up the water' driving before them 'thre or fower hundredth beastes at the leaste,' and leaving behind them

three dead Englishmen and one 'wounded almoste to deathe.' Between nine and ten in the morning news of the raid reached Eure at Hexham, the beacons were fired, and an appeal for men to cut off the raiders was speedily issued. But no more than four hundred men, all told, came in response to the summons, and although the Warden with this little army followed the Scots with their lowing plunder to within three or four miles of Scotland, they durst make no attack. 'With shame and griefe I speake it,' says Eure, 'the Scottes went away unfought withall.' A significant remark in his letter is that 'except Mr. Fenwicke there was not one gentleman of the Marche to accompanie, or mett me at all.' As a matter of fact, the gentlemen of the March on the English side knew better than to meddle with certain of the reiving Scots when they met them out riding for profit as well as for pleasure. In plain words, the Scots extorted blackmail from certain proprietors, whose livestock and houses suffered no scathe so long as the owner paid the lawful dues to his patrons, and remained deaf to all clamour and steadily looked in the other direction while the property of his neighbours was harried. In the minds of the raiders themselves, there could be no question as to the righteousness of this bargain. If an Englishman desired immunity from hostilities, he must pay for it. It must be a strictly commercial transaction—are we not taxed in order to support a

possibly no more efficient police force even to this day ?—and Auld Wat would have been grievously wronging his fair wife and numerous family had he been unbusinesslike in this respect. Even Scott of Buccleuch was, apparently, not above claiming blackmail. A letter dated Jan. 20, 1549, from young Buccleuch to a certain Alexander Macdonald of Kelso, states that last time he was in Kelso he sent William Scott of Harden and another to Macdonald's house (no doubt with Ferraras handy), but found him from home. Further, he desires him to send him his grey horse, or 'gif the grey be nocht in place, send me the broun. And gif ye do nocht it sal ken me gud ever to do yow ony favoris in tyme cuming. And I sall do yow ane grett skaitht nor twis the worth of the horse. And tak this for ane warning and nocht ellis, but God keip yow.' According to tradition, Harden was never slothful in business. When one of his daughters, known as 'Maggie Fendy,' married Sir Gilbert Eliott of Stobs ('Gibbie o' the Gowden Garters'), part of the marriage settlement—alas that the accuracy of the latter part of the tale has not been proved!—was that Gibbie and his bride should remain as the guests of Harden, at his Tower of Dryhope, for a year and a day, and that, in return for his hospitality, Gibbie should give his father-in-law 'the plunder of the first harvest moon.'

The tale of the marriage of his eldest son, William,

with a daughter of Murray of Elibank, has been sung by two such different people as the Ettrick Shepherd and Robert Browning. Young Scott was captured red-handed 'lifting' Elibank's cattle, and was condemned to be hanged on the gallows tree which no family of any standing was without. But Lady Elibank had a marriageable daughter, and Sir William was a proper youth, apparently as diligent in business as his famous father. 'Muckle-mouthed Meg' was the descriptive name of the maiden ('Agnes' is, unfortunately, her title in the provokingly unaccommodating legal documents that still exist), and Lady Elibank persuaded her husband to give his captive choice between hanging and matrimony. To young Harden the latter seemed the lesser evil, so he and Muckle-mouthed Meg were wed, and were the parents of five brave sons—their third son, 'Watty Wudspurs,' being the ancestor of a yet greater Walter Scott. The tale is not one that is very creditable to either of the contracting parties were we to accept the legend intact, and one is grateful to Robert Browning for his more romantic version. The unbending and defiant young reiver—the charming girl who passes as the gaoler's daughter, brings the reiver his porridge, and cheers his dreary solitude—the march out to death, with 'sky blue' and 'turf grassy,' and love for the winsome gaoleress in his heart—it is all very delightful. And most delightful of all is his scornful

HARDEN

rejection of Meg, under the very shadow of the gallows, and the response of Meg herself—

> '"Not Muckle-mouthed Meg? Wow, the obstinate man!
> Perhaps he would rather wed me!"
> "Ay, would he—with just for a dowry your can!"
> "I'm Muckle-mouthed Meg," chirruped she.'

Opposite Yarrow Kirk an old track runs westward and is called still 'Harden's Drive,' and many a head of English cattle must have passed along there in the good old days.

The ballad of 'Jamie Telfer o' the fair Dodhead' has immortalised one of Auld Wat's famous raids. There are wise men who tell us that the ballad is 'unhistorical, legendary, and late.' There is no mention of the raid in those most accurate of bills, the account of debit and credit kept by the English and Scottish wardens, nor can the name of Jamie Telfer be found in any record. It would seem to be a well-disguised rendering of a foray made by Musgrave, Captain of Bewcastle, long before the days of Auld Wat and Gibbie o' the Gowden Garters. Be that as it may, the erudite will find it almost as easy to persuade Borderers to doubt the authenticity of the Psalms of David as to give up their belief in the historical accuracy of their ballad. The Captain of Bewcastle and his men had ridden over the March, and in Teviotdale found the booty they sought in the cattle of 'Jamie Telfer o' the fair Dodhead.' As

they rode homeward in triumph the heart-broken Jamie sought for help. No horse was left to him.

'The sun wasna up, but the moon was down,
It was the gryming of a new-fa'en snaw,
Jamie Telfer has run ten miles a-foot,
Between the Dodhead and the Stobs Ha'.'

But Gibbie o' the Gowden Garters would have none of him.

'Gae seek your succour at Branksome Ha',
For succour ye 'se get nane frae me!
Gae seek your succour where ye paid blackmail,
For, man, ye ne'er paid money to me.'

From Jock Grieve o' the Coultart Cleugh his treatment was more kindly, and on 'a bonny black' Jamie Telfer rode on to 'tak the fraye.' There was no hesitation amongst any of the Scott clan, from Buccleuch downwards, when the news was proclaimed, and Wat o' Harden and his sons were amongst the avengers who rode hot-trod for the south.

'The Scotts they rade, the Scotts they ran,
Sae starkly and sae steadily!
And aye the ower-word o' the thrang
Was—"Rise for Branksome readilie!"'

Through the hills and across the moors of Liddesdale they rode, and near a burn which joins the Teviot close to Mosspaul the English raiders were overtaken, and the fray began.

'Then till 't they gaed, wi' heart and hand,
The blows fell thick as bickering hail;
And mony a horse ran masterless,
And mony a manly cheek was pale.'

Willie Scott, brave son of the bold Buccleuch, was one of those who fell.

'And Harden grat for very rage,
When Willie on the grund lay slain.
But he 's taen aff his gude steel cap,
And thrice he 's waved it in the air—
The Dinlay snaw was ne'er mair white
Nor the lyart locks of Harden's hair.
"Revenge! Revenge!" auld Wat 'gan cry;
"Fye, lads, set on them cruellie!
We 'll ne'er see Teviotside again,
Or Willie's death revenged sall be."'

And revenged most handsomely it was, both in blood and in plunder, and Jamie Telfer was a wealthier man because of the foray of the Captain of Bewcastle. Was Wat's adopted son amongst the raiders that wintry night? And is it to him that we owe the pictures of the 'gryming of a new-fa'en snaw,' and of Auld Wat, a Border lion at bay, waving his steel cap over locks as white as the snow on one of the lonely hills of Liddesdale?

According to the Ettrick Shepherd, the bridge at Ettrick Bridgend owes its existence to Auld Wat, and the stone which was removed from the old bridge and built into the present one bears the crescent moon and the Harden motto. Wat had brought back a

rich booty from Northumberland, so the story goes, but richest of all the plunder was a hostage, the little son of Neville of Ravensworth. Probably the night was dark and the Ettrick running high, but as the reivers forded the river on their return, the child slipped into the water and was swiftly carried away. In stone and in lime Wat's penance was paid. 'One life lost shall save a hundred,' he said, when he had built the bridge over the ford.

The office of Warden in Wat o' Harden's day was assuredly no sinecure, as the letters that went from the English Wardens up to London still can prove. 'They' (the Scots reivers) 'are alleredy very bisy,' wrote Sir Robert Carey, afterwards Earl of Monmouth, in a letter asking for help. 'The longer the nightes growe, the worse will they be.' Much had this poor man to suffer from the frequent wilful blindness of the Scottish Wardens, Buccleuch and Cessford and from their even more frequent active instigation to those for whose good conduct they were supposed to be responsible to raid the English Border. The 'twoo fyrebrandes of the Border' those Wardens were called, in 1597, by Bowes, the English ambassador, and while they lived and ruled neither their own sovereign, nor she who reigned in England, was permitted a dull moment.

Sir Robert Ker, younger of Cessford—created, in 1616, first Earl of Roxburghe—did duty for his

father, sometimes from his house, 'The Friars,' at Kelso, sometimes from the old keep of Holydene. The precepts of a pious ancestress, graven in stone in 1530, still exist at the latter place. '*Feir God. Fle from sin. Mak for the Lyfe Everlesting to the End,*' said Dame Esbel Ker. But Sir Robert Ker, popularly known as 'Habby,' feared neither God nor man. To advance himself in the world, to avenge himself on his enemies—and they were many—to keep, when possible, on the winning side, such were the precepts of one who was, with truth, 'a bloodye man.' 'Habby's hanging tree' still exists, and his unhallowed ghost is said still to ride. The power of his name is known even now to the country-folk who, at night, hear the owls hoot from the ivy of the tower where once he lived, or who pass by the old grey kirk of Bowden, where his body lies, when the moon is high and the spirits of dead reivers may be expected to be abroad. There was a gallant insolence, a magnificent arrogance, about Sir Robert Ker, at the time when it suited his book to disturb the peace of English subjects as much as lay in his power, which goes some way to atone for his many evil deeds. He would personally superintend a foray, slay, with his own hand, 'most bloodylye,' a brace or two of Englishmen, and triumphantly sound his 'trompet' to make all men aware that Habby himself was present, while his followers went on with the killing. The welfare of friends or

retainers was little to him, but woe be to the man who, in injuring one of Cessford's retainers, touched the pride of the chief. One of his herds had 'one shepe hogg' stolen from him by an Englishman. Over the Border, to Wooler, rode Sir Robert and sixty horsemen, slew two men there for the crime that they were English, and rode back to the keep under the shadow of the Eildons, 'sounding his trompett in the towne gate while they were a killing, and all the way home.' 'So highlie,' writes Sir John Carey, 'was Sesforde's honor toiched therein.'

Buccleuch, Warden of Liddesdale, was a man of a different stamp from his brother-in-law, Robert Ker. Never could it be said that Scott of Buccleuch let self-interest come between him and loyalty either to friend or to foe. A firebrand he might be, a most accomplished raider he undoubtedly was, but Buccleuch was not a 'bloody man.' He slew only when slaying was necessary. As a leader he was one of the great men of his century, and even in days that were rich in brave men and in gallant deeds, Buccleuch towered as a giant above his fellows. The magnificent exploit of the release of Kinmont Willie, when Buccleuch was a man of thirty, is a story with regard to which ballad and State papers show but few discrepancies.

Kinmont Willie was a worthy descendant of Johnny Armstrong, a raider whose frequent successes

made him an object of much dislike to the English Wardens. In March 1596 there was a day's truce for the meeting of the Wardens, which was held at Dayholm, near Kershopefoot. As a retainer of Buccleuch, his Warden and feudal lord, Kinmont Willie was present, and as he rode homewards with a small band of friends, a body of two hundred English horsemen, commanded by Salkeld, deputy of Lord Scrope, Warden of the East March, surprised him, and, after a chase of two or three miles, took him prisoner. Like a common malefactor, arms tied behind him, legs bound under his horse's belly, his captors brought him to Carlisle town. It was a shameless violation of the Border law, which ordained that on those days of truce all Scots and Englishmen who were present at the Wardens' meeting should be free of scathe from sunrise on the one day until sunset on the next. Buccleuch, when news reached him of the treacherous taking of his friend, at once raised an angry protest. The English Warden received this with an evasive and obviously trumped up countercharge of Kinmont Will having first broken truce. Moreover, he said, he was a notorious enemy to law and order, and must bear the penalty. Too much this was for the bold Buccleuch.

'He has ta'en the table wi' his hand,
He garr'd the red wine spring on hie—
"Now Christ's curse on my head," he said,
"But avenged of Lord Scrope I'll be!

O is my basnet a widow's curch?
Or my lance a wand o' the willow-tree?
Or my arm a ladye's lilye hand,
That an English lord should lightly me?"'

An appeal to King James resulted in an application to the English government, but while the English authorities quibbled, paltered, and delayed, the days of Kinmont Willie were being numbered by his captors, who were not likely to forgo the triumph of putting an end to the daring deeds of so bold a Scot when they had him safely chained in Carlisle Castle, with Haribee Hill so handily near for a hanging. Buccleuch saw that he had no time to lose. He must strike at once and strike fiercely.

Shrewd and chill blew the winds down the Liddesdale glens, the burns and rivers were in spate, and sleet drifted down in the teeth of the gale on the dark and stormy night, early in April 1596, when Buccleuch, with a band of some forty of his friends and kinsmen upon whom he most relied, rode through the woods from his house of Woodhouselee to meet some hundred and fifty, or so, of other chosen men. Scotts, Elliots, Armstrongs, and Graemes were there, and although Buccleuch had requested that only younger sons were to risk their lives in the forlorn hope that night, Auld Wat o' Harden and many another landowner rode with their chief. 'Valiant men, they would not bide,' says Scott of

BOWDEN KIRK

Satchells. Kinmont Willie's tower of Morton, on the Water of Sark, some ten miles north of Carlisle, was their rallying-point. Every detail had been carefully arranged by Buccleuch at a horse-race that was held at Langholm a few days before. The reivers, one and all, were well armed, 'with spur on heel, and splent on spauld,'[1] and carried with them iron crowbars, picks, axes, and scaling ladders. The Esk and Eden were in furious flood, but no flood could stay the reivers' horses that night.

'"We go to catch a rank reiver
Has broken faith wi' the bauld Buccleuch."
. . . . . .
"Where are ye gaun, ye mason lads,
Wi' a' your ladders, lang and hie?"
"We gang to herry a corbie's nest,
That wons not far frae Woodhouselee."'

To harry the corbie's nest was no light matter. Carlisle Castle rears itself aloft on the northern boundary of the town, and it was strongly garrisoned. But Nature played into the hands of the men who were still her unspoiled, if uncultured, children. Wind and sleet were now reinforced by a thunderstorm.

'And when we left the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind began full loud to blaw,
But 'twas wind and weet, and fire and sleet,
When we came beneath the castle wa'.'

The watch was either asleep at their posts or shelter-

[1] Armour on shoulder.

ing from the storm when the besiegers reached the castle. It was dismaying to find their scaling ladders too short, but a postern door was speedily undermined. The tumult of the storm drowned the sounds of the assault, and now there was no further need for concealment, for the lower court of the castle was theirs. The guard was overpowered, and two of them left dead, and Buccleuch, the fifth man in, gave the command to proclaim aloud their triumph.

> '"Now sound out trumpets!" quoth Buccleuch;
> "Let's waken Lord Scroope right merrilie!"
> Then loud the Warden's trumpet blew—
> "*O wha daur meddle wi' me?*"'

To the castle gaol, while Buccleuch himself kept guard at the postern, twenty-four stout moss-troopers now rushed, forced the door of Kinmont's prison, and carried him out on the back of 'the starkest man in Teviotdale,' fetters and all.

'Stand to it!' cried Buccleuch—so says the traitor who afterwards acted as informer to the English Warden—'I have vowed to God and my Prince that I will fetch Kinmont out of England dead or quick!'

Shouts of victory, the clash of picks on shattered doors and ruined mason-work, and that insolent and oft-repeated blast from the trumpet of him whom Scrope described to the Privy Council as 'the capten of this proud attempt,' were not reassuring sounds to the Warden of the English Marches,

his deputy, and his garrison. They lay low and said nothing, or, in the words of the historian, they 'did keip thamselffis close.' But no sooner had the rescue party reached the Eden, than there was an alarm in good earnest. Bells clanged, the beacon on the great tower did its best, in spite of storm and sleet and tempest, to warn all honest English folk with its red-tongued flames that a huge army of Scots was on the war-path, and that the gallows on Haribee Hill had been insulted by the abduction of its lawful prey.

'We scarce had won the Staneshaw-bank,
When a' the Carlisle bells were rung,
And a thousand men on horse and foot,
Cam wi' the keen Lord Scroope along.

Buccleuch has turn'd to Eden Water,
Even where it flow'd frae bank to brim,
And he has plunged in wi' a' his band,
And safely swam them through the stream.

He turned him on the other side,
And at Lord Scroope his glove flung he—
"If ye like na' my visit in merry England,
In fair Scotland come visit me!"

All sore astonished stood Lord Scroope,
He stood as still as rock of stane;
He scarcely dared to trew his eyes,
When through the water they had gane.

"He is either himsel' a devil frae hell,
Or else his mother a witch maun be;
I wadna' have ridden that wan water
For a' the gowd in Christentie."'

Between Longtown and Langholm there was still pointed out in Sir Walter's day a cottage where lived the smith who had the honour of knocking off Kinmont Willie's fetters. Tradition hands on through the centuries the story of the smith's daughter, who, as a little child, was roused at daybreak by a 'sair clatter' of horses and shouts for her father, followed, as the smith slept sound, by a lance being thrust through the window. Looking out in the grey of the morning, the child saw 'more gentlemen than she had ever seen before in one place, all on horseback, in armour and dripping wet—and that Kinmont Willie, who sat woman-fashion behind one of them, was the biggest carle she ever saw—and there was much merriment in the party.'

Furious was the hive of wasps that Buccleuch brought about his head by thus insultingly casting a stone into the English bike. Queen Elizabeth's royal resentment was unappeasable. The Warden found it expedient to magnify the number of the raiders to five hundred, but the truth leaked out, and the Englishmen of Carlisle had the extra bitterness of being butts for the jest of every Scot on the Border.

The success of a venture so daring made the raiders arrogant. Between June 19th and July 24th of that year, the spoils on the western Marches were a thousand and sixty-one cattle and ninety-eight horses, and some

thirty steadings and other buildings, mostly in Gilsland, were burned. The English made reprisals. It was on one of them that men were leashed 'like doggis,' and for this Buccleuch, and Ker of Cessford, took rapid revenge by an incursion together into Tynedale, where, in broad daylight, they burned three hundred steadings and dwelling-houses, many barns, stables, etc., slew with the sword fourteen of those who had been in the Scottish raid, and brought back much booty.

King James was hard put to it. When Elizabeth demanded Buccleuch's punishment, he shuffled, and demanded on his part that she should punish Edmund Spenser for the insult to the memory of Mary Queen of Scots, contained in the description of the 'false Duessa,' in the *Faerie Queen*. At last, however, he had to give in to the continual and angry remonstrances of the insulted Queen of England. Buccleuch and Ker had both, at different periods, to suffer imprisonment for the sin, in the Queen's eyes, of the rescue of Kinmont Willie and its bloody consequences.

But Buccleuch had even on her a revenge worth having. Two years after his imprisonment, when he was on his way with two hundred followers to serve with Prince Maurice of Nassau in the Low Countries—from whence many a Border raider never returned—Buccleuch was sufficiently much received into favour to be permitted to go to London and kiss the hand

of her most gracious Majesty. The remembrance of Kinmont Willie still rankled in that most unforgiving of royal breasts.

'How dared you,' she imperiously demanded, 'undertake an enterprise so desperate and presumptuous?'

'Dared?' answered Buccleuch, 'what is it that a man *dares* not do?'

Elizabeth turned impetuously to a lord-in-waiting. 'With ten thousand such men,' she said, 'our brother of Scotland might shake the firmest crown in Europe.'

And so say we still on the Border. If the career of more than one of our ancestors may have been cut short on the gallows tree, yet can we boast of the dauntless courage and daring, the unfailing coolness and resourcefulness in the face of dire emergency, the unblemished loyalty and faithfulness of those who, in later days, might have builded empires,—the men of the Border Marches.

'Though now the hot hoofs thunder
No more down Coquet side,
Nor south for white-armed plunder
The wild moss-troopers ride,
When Beauty wants a warder,
When fight and foray start,
We, bred upon the Border,
Have still the reiver's heart.'

## CHAPTER VIII

### MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

And oft she sighed, 'To be born a King!'
And oft along the way,
When she saw the lonely lovers pass,
She has said, 'Alack the day!'

D. G. Rossetti.

If the spirits of the dead do indeed return to scenes where they have sinned and suffered, have fought and died, have loved, and lived life to the full, then many a lordly shade must have left the dark Cocytus valley to ride down the leafy vale of Tweed and to haunt the wan water of the Border streams.

Kings and queens there are amongst the ghostly riders, among them that queen from whose name not even Death's stern hand has been able to remove the strife of tongues. Over three hundred years have passed since Mary Stuart's gallant spirit and fair body were brutally severed, yet even now she has her bitter enemies, her faithful followers, her true lovers. For it has been ordained that each child that comes into our world must be born a Roundhead or a Cavalier, a Hanoverian or a Jacobite, an admirer and upholder

of John Knox and of 'Good Queen Bess,' or a passionate partisan of the ill-starred queen for whom many of the faithful now seek a place in the calendar of saints of that Church of which she was so loyal a daughter.

Of her writes one of her stoutest champions:[1] 'Mary was the Helen of the modern world. Discord came to her christening with the apple of strife, the one fatal gift among other gifts so goodly: beauty, charm, courage, and a loyal heart. Round her cradle men and women intrigued and lied; many a time her grand-uncle had practised to carry the infant away from her guarded castle. For her sake the Border again and again was ravaged, and Beaton was slain, and corpses lay in thousands on the field of Pinkie Heugh. . . . For Mary men poured out their lives like water. She was more to them than a woman; she was a religion and an ideal. But Fate, from her cradle, lay so heavy upon her that no conceivable conduct of hers could have steered her safely through the plotting crowns and creeds, the rival dissemblers, bigots, hypocrites, and ruffians who, with jealousy, and hatred, and desire, on every side surrounded her. Joyous by nature, and by virtue of her youth, she was condemned to a life of tears, and destined to leave a stained and contested honour.'

'God save that sweet face!' was the cry of the

[1] A. Lang, *History of Scotland.*

people of Edinburgh when, as Queen, she first appeared among them; but it seemed at times as though Mary had help neither from God nor man, but went on blindly to her doom.

She was still a happy child in France when, on the Border, there had already come to be known well as a more than ordinary young dare-devil, the man whose black shadow we can almost see behind her as we picture her riding away from Edinburgh with her face turned to the south.

James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, came into his kingdom, such as it was, when he was barely twenty years of age. The 'glorious, rash, hazardous young man,' as Elizabeth's ambassador described him, came of wild, fighting stock. He succeeded to impoverished estates, and to the hereditary offices of Lord High Admiral of Scotland, Sheriff of Berwick, Haddington, and Edinburgh, and Bailie of Lauderdale; Hailes and Borthwick being his fortresses. His boyhood could scarcely have been profitably spent, as it mainly was spent with his great-uncle, Patrick Hepburn, Bishop of Moray, than whom few greater profligates ever wore a mitre. Part of his education was acquired in France, and handsome, red-haired James Hepburn was not only the most fearlessly daring of warriors, but was a youth of courtly accomplishments. He wrote French well, in the Italian hand that was then new, gracefully, firmly, and clearly. He was a

classical scholar, and although his enemies declared that he studied only the black arts, and, by sinful magic, won his way at last to the heart of a queen, he has left behind him books—one of which may be seen in the Edinburgh University Library—which show that he deemed it worth while to possess French treatises and translations dealing with military matters, and to have them exquisitely bound. He would seem to have been one of those who believe in no man's or woman's virtue, because it is impossible for them to believe in their own. One does not know what came between him and Dame Janet Beaton, to whom, as a lad, he was handfasted. A turbulent pair they would have made. Dame Janet was a niece of the Cardinal, and became the Lady Creichton and then Lady Preston—she was divorced from Simon Preston of Craigmillar—before she finally became the Lady Buccleuch, the wizard lady of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel.* She it was who urged on her son to avenge his father's murder, and who, as a widow, led an avenging army of two hundred of the Clan Scott from Branxholm to the kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes, and broke open the doors to seize the laird of Cranstoun.

To add to his other charms, Bothwell possessed to a marked degree what Lord Rosebery has called ' the engaging quality of recklessness.' When the cause of Mary of Guise was not one which it was profitable

for any young man to uphold, Bothwell gave her the support of his sword. In 1558, when she had been deserted by her nobles at Kelso, he was harrying the English border on her behalf. He was a member of Privy Council, fought for her in her war with the Lords of the Congregation, and was skilled as a plunderer of worthy tradesmen during the siege of Leith. In 1559, near Haddington, he seized and robbed a messenger who was carrying £1000 in English gold from Elizabeth to the Lords. In 1560 he was sent as the emissary of the Queen Mother to France, to seek aid there, and in Denmark, on his way thither, *pour passer le temps*, he became betrothed to Anne Throndssön, a lady of noble birth, deserting her, shortly afterwards, in the Netherlands, but retaining her dowry as remembrance of their brief wedded life. In France his amours were notorious; equally notorious were they in his own land. To him, apparently, no woman was virtuous.

'His own Queen and the Queen of England would not together make one honest woman,' said this 'glorious, rash' young man, who was one of the first to throw mud on the name of the girl queen, whose youth and widow's weeds, and the fact that he was one of the seven lords entrusted by her to arrange for her return to Scotland, might have spared her his assaults.

In spite of his faithfulness to her mother's cause,

Mary might well have hated him. Maybe she did, in those early days, in spite of her love for deeds of 'hardiness and valiance' even by her enemies, but she was never allowed to forget him. In the tragedy of Mary Stuart, Bothwell was the strong man who is always there, a hero — or villain — for pit and gallery; ever possessing a prominent place on life's stage, ruffling it openly and loudly, with drawn sword and voice of no uncertain sound. To her, who had the soul of a man in the body of a woman, his dauntless force, his virility, must ever have made appeal. It was to him at last that her sex betrayed her. She had not long been queen at Holyrood ere he incurred her royal displeasure by being one of the principals in an unseemly street brawl on a more than usually large scale. Then followed denunciation by the crazed Earl of Arran of a plot of Bothwell's for Mary's abduction. The evidence was certainly not all that could be desired, but into Edinburgh Castle was placed this cock of the Borders. We might trust him to break prison and escape to his own grim castle of Hermitage in Liddesdale, whose only one fair memory in a dark history of violence and of crime is the flying visit of a beautiful queen. The power wielded by the Earl of Moray was now too great to be withstood even by Bothwell and those lawless broken clans of Hepburns, Hays, and others who were his devoted followers, and

Bothwell had to flee to France. But storms drove him ashore at Holy Island, and there he was constrained to stay as Queen Elizabeth's prisoner for the two years that followed. That affair of the thousand fair gold pieces that she was sending north with such secrecy was not likely to have slipped the memory of the English Queen. It was Mary herself who pled for his liberty, and he was set free, and took a command in the Scots Guards, where the name of Hepburn was later to hold such honourable place. To show how little any authority, royal or otherwise, meant to him, he had to return without leave to the Border; but it was so easily seen that nothing was to be gained by remaining, and so much to be lost, that he went back to France very shortly before the Fates had driven their plaything, Mary, into marriage with Darnley.

All the glamour of her husband's *beaux yeux* had entirely worn off ere Bothwell and Mary met again. She had miserably realised that instead of the strong man's tender sympathy and fearless spirit that she had coveted to have for friend and protector in her loneliness and life of hazardous responsibility, there was in that lusty, long-limbed body of her husband the soul of a pettish, spoilt, selfish child, the temperament of a vicious profligate. His infidelities were an open secret. In public he disgraced himself and his queen by his drunkenness and insolence

towards her. 'I am but young,' was the only plea worth consideration that the wretched lad ever offered. Bothwell was, no doubt, the greater villain, but his vices were those of strength and not of weakness. Presumably he drank rather more deeply than did Darnley, but he had the Borderer's head, and the iron constitution of the men of the Marches. Darnley demanded the Wardenship of the Border for his father, the Earl of Lennox, but Mary had already had overmuch of that family; weaklings were never to her taste. Bothwell was recalled from France, his honours restored to him, and he received the appointment, and, in February 1566, was given further gracious proof of royal forgiveness and favour on his marriage with Lady Jean Gordon, sister of the Earl of Huntly, in the Canongate Church of Edinburgh, by the queen giving the bride her wedding gown—'cloth of silver, lined with taffeta'—and signing the marriage contract. Lady Jean loved another, and fraternal persuasion managed the match; but, such was the power of Bothwell, that she fell in love with her husband after marriage. One is glad to think that this virtuous lady made two successful unions later on in life, marrying, when Bothwell's successor died, her first love.

Bothwell's honeymoon was not over when he was called upon to stand by his Queen.

In that ugly plot, that cowardly murder in the

little oak room at Holyrood, when, clutching the skirts of his royal patron, in dire terror of his doom, David Rizzio was foully done to death, several Borderers helped to deal the fifty-six wounds, but in it Bothwell had no part. He was one of those who crossed swords with the escaping assassins in the courtyard, and he enabled Mary the next night to escape from Holyrood with its bloodstained floor, and to find sanctuary at Dunbar.

In June of that year James VI. was born, and, in the following August, Mary and Darnley, Moray, Bothwell, and other lords of high degree hunted in Meggatdale. The sport was poor, the royal preserves had been poached, and Darnley's uncontrolled temper was never proof against the buffets of fortune, however slight. The more hardly must his surly pettishness have been judged by one of whom, in a dreary campaign in the Highlands, when the weather was 'extreame fowle and colde,' an English ambassador relates that he 'never saw her merrier, never dismayed.' She longed to be a man, she said then; 'to lie all night in the fields, or to walk upon the causeway with a pack or knapschall (head-piece), a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword.' The unlicked cub, her husband, was of the stuff of which the wife-beater of the slums is made. Men he dared not bully, but Mary was a woman, and his wife. To her he was 'brutally insolent,' and in a fit of childish sulks went off,

leaving her and her company behind on the moors.

In September, Border affairs being far from peaceful, the Privy Council made proclamation that the Queen and Darnley would hold 'justice airs,' or circuit courts, at Jedburgh on October 8th. Darnley was then again sulking in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and Mary had to go without him. Bothwell, Warden of the Marches, had, meantime, demanded surrender from the more turbulent of the Border reivers, and had captured and imprisoned those who defied him, in his castle of Hermitage.

There was then a hardy freebooter who claimed to be chief of the Elliot clan and captain of Hermitage, and whose deeds had been metrically described by Maitland of Lethington. Jock Elliot and his fellows

> 'Leave nor spindle, spoon, nor spit,
> Bed, bolster, blanket, shirt, nor sheet;
> John o' the Park,
> Rypis chest and ark;
> For all such wark
> He is right meet.'

Still, in the districts that once were spoiled by him, is 'Little Jock Elliot' a hero. And although we may only know the chorus of the old song that has immortalised him, the rousing air that has led many a Border lad into the fight has been supplied with equally rousing words by one who was himself a 'Jethart callant'

'My castle is aye my ain,
An' herried it never shall be;
For I maun fa' ere it 's taen,
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?
Wi' my kuit i' the rib o' my naig,
My sword hingin' doun by my knee,
For man I am never afraid,
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?
Wha daur meddle wi' me?
Wha daur meddle wi' me?
Oh, my name is little Jock Elliot,
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?
. . . .
I munt my gude naig wi' a will
When the fray 's in the wund, an' he
Cocks his lugs as he tugs for the hill
That enters the South countrie,
Where pricking and spurring are rife,
And the bluid boils up like the sea,
But Southrons gang doon i' the strife!
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?
Wha daur meddle wi' me?
Wha daur meddle wi' me?
Oh, my name is little Jock Elliot,
An' wha daur meddle wi' me?'

On the day that the Queen rode out from Edinburgh with Moray and a large escort of other nobles, Bothwell came to the park and took little Jock Elliot. As they rode together towards Hermitage, Jock, who had that conscience void of offence that was the precious heritage of the Border reiver, inquired of his captor if, having appeared at the Assizes, his life would be spared,—if, so to speak, he would be told not to be naughty again, and allowed to go free.

Said Bothwell, 'Gif ane assyises (assize) wald mak him clene, he was hertlie contentit, but he behuvit to pas to the Quenis grace.'

This was much too little of a promise to suit Jock. Reivers had been hanged by kings before his day, and he had no ambition for this royal recognition. He slipped from his horse and took to his heels: but in Bothwell he found his match. The Warden put a pistol-shot into the fugitive, dismounted, and gave chase. The ground was rough, and he stumbled and fell, whereupon Jock turned back, and gave his prostrate enemy three vicious stabs, one in the hand, one in the head, and one in the body, with, no doubt, a hearty desire that they would prove mortal,—'Wha daur meddle wi' me?' Fallen and wounded though he was, Bothwell drew his whinger and drove it twice into Jock's breast before he swooned away. Still swooning he was when his servants found him and carried him off to Hermitage, but Jock, sorely wounded, managed to stagger on for yet another mile and reach a hill top, where they found him dead. Probably it was the death he would have craved—a man's death, not a felon's,—a free man, looking up with dying eyes at the wide free sky, the lark singing high above him, benty grass for his pillow, winds that swept across hills and moors sighing over his cold, still face.

Bothwell had been well 'daggered.' Some months

later, when Mary was looking at her husband's florid, flushed face (wine and temper probably did not improve the fair complexion which at first she had held for one of his charms), she told him that it would do him good 'to be a little daggered and to bleed as much as my Lord of Bothwell had lately done.'

The royal train had reached Borthwick Castle when news came to them of Bothwell's wounds. According to the lying tale of Buchanan, one of the most slanderously and unscrupulously ill-tongued of her enemies, 'When news thereof was brought to Borthwick to the Queen, she flingeth away in haste like a mad woman, by great journeys in post, in the sharp time of winter, first to Melrose, and then to Jedworth.'

The true story is that Mary rode on, as at first arranged, to Melrose, then to Jedburgh, where, on October 9th, she opened her Circuit Court. The Court sat for six days, closing on the 14th. On the 10th and 11th she presided at meetings of the Privy Council, on the 15th received Le Croc, the French ambassador. On the 16th she set off for Hermitage to make inquiry for the wounded Warden. Her 'enemies, persecutors, and slanderers'—and, whatever may have been her sins, Mary Stuart had always more than her fair share of them—saw no reason but her 'outrageous lust' for such a visit. Reports of Bothwell's grave illness and great weakness must have

reached her at Jedburgh. It had even been currently reported that he was dead. To make personal inquiry for a grievously sick man whom she had come to regard as one of her most trusted and valued servants, must seem, to a mind that is not prurient, the natural and innocent action of a sympathetic woman and a gracious queen. Moreover, in all surety, she was guarded by a grave band of chaperons. The Earl of Moray, the Earl of Huntly (Bothwell's brother-in-law), and Mr. Secretary Lethington formed part of her escort when, on her white palfrey, she rode away from the old grey house with its little windows, and its orchard of pear-trees, in the Backgate of Jedburgh, on that October day. The Border country was not a safe one for travellers in those times, and with the Warden lying wounded in his castle, little Jock Elliot slain by him, and public feeling at the punishment that had been meted out to certain reivers running high, Mary risked something besides the assault of evil tongues. But always she showed 'a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory.' She was but a girl, and her crown must have weighed heavy during those six days of solemn consideration of affairs of state. To be out of doors again, on the back of a good horse, on an October day, when dead leaves smell fragrant and the bracken on the Border moors is red, and the burns splash and foam in their haste to reach the sea, and when robbers might be

expected to challenge at any moment in the dangerous country she was riding through,—it was an adventure just after Mary's gallant heart. The route her suite chose for her was apparently the longest, if the safest one,—by Swinnie Moor, into Rule Water, across Earlside Moor, crossing the Slitrig below Stobs, then, probably, leaving Hawick to the right, by Whitlaw, Flex, and Priesthaugh, between the hills to the head of the Braidlee Burn, and from thence down to Hermitage. We can see the grey mist, the 'Liddesdale drow,' clinging to the hills, grey mist that was not long in turning into rain that drenched the riders through and through long ere they reached Hermitage. The Queen, still in her dripping garments, interviewed Bothwell, made arrangements for the victualling of the garrison, and signed the appointment of one, George Sinclair, to a certain office in Edinburgh. The few hours spent there were occupied by business of state. 'Chambering and wantonness' were, on this occasion, the lying suggestion of the unclean minds of those who hated her. Undaunted by the weather and by the thirty miles of heavy riding which she had already had, she set off, when the horses had been rested, for the return journey. The short October day left the party in storm and darkness in the lonely passes of the hills. Mary, pricking on ahead of her escort, at the Braidlee Burn, near the March between Teviotdale and Liddesdale, rode into a bog in which

many a horse had perished, and from which she and her palfrey were with difficulty extricated. The 'Queen's Mire' is its name to this day, and there is a tale of a beautiful chased spur that she lost in the bog, and of its recovery not many years ago, while as late as 1823 there was found on a molehill on the line of hill road that leads to Hermitage an antique gold watch that is supposed to have been dropped by one of her retinue in the dark homeward ride on that stormy night of October. They reached Jedburgh at last, having ridden in one day, in cruel weather, almost sixty miles. Her servants marvelled at the amount she had come through that day.

Said the Queen, 'Troth it is I am but a woman, but yet I am more than a woman in that I could find in my heart to see and behold that which any man durst do, and can find in my heart to do anything that a man durst do, if my strength would serve me thereto,'—a speech quoted as evidence against her in days when her enemies called her murderess.

But her physical strength, never great, in this case did not serve her. Next morning the Queen was in a high fever, with violent pains and constant sickness. The diagnosis in those days was, of course, simple, the physician having little choice between poison and witchcraft. In the case of a reigning sovereign, poison was naturally suspected, and, in any case, the Queen's physicians despaired of her life. In later days, hæma-

temesis, or an effusion of blood into the stomach, has been suggested by authorities. The modern lay mind flies at once to appendicitis. But whatever the illness may have been, the Queen was indeed sick unto death. When the news reached Edinburgh, all the bells were rung, and the churches were kept open for public prayer. Believing herself to be *in extremis* she took formal farewell of Moray and her other councillors, made all arrangements for the care of her kingdom and of her infant son, disposed of her personal belongings, and made her peace with God. On the ninth day of her illness, after a terrible paroxysm of pain, she fainted, and remained cold, rigid, and unconscious for several hours. Her household believed her to be dead, and opened the windows that her spirit might have free egress. The Earl of Moray wasted no time in vain regrets, but laid hands on her plate and jewels. Arrangements were made for her funeral, and 'blacks' were ordered for the mourners and members of the royal household. She lay from nine A.M. until nearly one o'clock before it occurred to her French doctor to use extreme methods and so to restore consciousness.

Darnley, meantime, employed himself in 'halkand and huntand' in the west country, and made no attempt to come and see his apparently dying Queen. 'This is a fault which I cannot excuse,' wrote the French ambassador, then at Jedburgh, to

the Archbishop of Glasgow. For shame's sake he had to come at last, lodging for the one night he spent in the town, not at Lady Fernihirst's house, where Mary lay, but at a house belonging to Lord Home, now demolished. His reception did not please him, and still nursing the wounded feelings beside which the sufferings and probable death of his sick wife counted for nought, he went off next day. Not once, but many times, did Darnley's unreliable weakness and the childish pettiness of his selfish egoism show themselves as foil for Bothwell's strength and manliness. 'She concealeth no cowardice, even in her friends.' Mary loved courage in friend and foe, and she had come to count upon Bothwell. As soon as it was possible for him to be moved, he was borne on a litter all these weary miles of rough road from Hermitage to Jedburgh, that he might be near his Queen in her dire sickness. Once out of danger, that time of convalescence in the old house at Jedburgh must have had its pleasures. Bothwell was an interesting companion. He spoke the French tongue that she so dearly loved, and which Darnley barely knew. To one, John Hume, ere she left, she paid forty shillings for playing to her on the lute during those weeks, and to John Heron the sum of four pounds for playing 'on the pipe and quhissil.' What the Border town could not provide in the way of luxuries for the invalid was sent from Edinburgh. 'Twenty apples and

pomegranates and six citrons' are amongst the items on one list. She had the deft fingers of the true artist, in tapestry and all needlework, and that she and her Maries were not idle in those days, the beautiful piece of tapestry that was until lately to be seen in 'Queen Mary's House' at Jedburgh, exists to prove. To the High Treasurer she wrote an order for materials for work: 'After the sight of this writ ye shall not fail to send a servant of your own in all possible haste to Edinburgh, and cause him to bring to this town twenty ells of red champit chamlet of silk, with twenty ells white plaiding, four ells white taffety, three ells fine black velvet, four ells small lyons canvas, six ounces black stitching silk, with a pound of black thread. This in no way shall ye fail to do, keeping this writ for your warrant. Subscribed with our hand at Jedburgh the penult day of October 1566.—Marie R.'

By November 8th her strength was sufficiently regained for her to leave Jedburgh, having first paid Lady Fernihirst the sum of forty pounds for the thirty days during which she had rented her house, and having given twenty pounds to the poor of the town as a thank-offering for her recovery. It is hard to see how she could fail to leave friends behind her, but the poison widely spread by those pillars of Presbyterianism, Knox and Buchanan, had filtered amongst the people even before their Queen had done anything

to bring upon herself the stone-throwing of a self-righteous mob. Even then the voice of the godly Knox might have been heard at Berwick, like distant thunder, upraised in condemnation of the Popish Queen. The matrimonial affairs of the Reformer seem to be associated with the Border, for this damnatory reviler of fleshly lusts married at Berwick, when close upon fifty, Miss Marjory Bowes, the youthful daughter of one of the numerous devout ladies whose spiritual adviser he had been. His second wife, daughter of Lord Ochiltrie, was a child of sixteen years of age when he, a widower of fifty-nine, made her his bride. One cannot feel surprised that the second Mrs. John Knox in her next venture made no attempt to keep up to the Knox standard, but married Ker of Faldonside, one of the murderers of Rizzio, as bloody a ruffian as ever rode the Marches.

From Jedburgh Queen Mary rode to Kelso, spending two nights there. The little grey town by the Tweed must have been looking its chilliest in that November weather. From thence she went to Home Castle, the old castle that still proudly overlooks the Merse from its sentinel post on the south slope of the Lammermuirs. Through the Merse, by Wedderburn and Langton, she rode towards Berwick. With an escort of nearly one thousand horsemen she rode to the English boundary, that she might have a view of the town for the possession of which so much good

Scots and English blood had been shed. Sir John Forster, Deputy-Governor, did the honours. He and sixty horsemen, captains and gentlemen all, went with her first to Halidon Hill, and then to a height, west of the town, from whence she could see the grey walls and bridge, the towers and spires, the red roofs, and the masts of the ships lying in the harbour of the old town by the fierce North Sea. As she viewed it, a royal salute was discharged in her honour, and the courteous Forster and his men accompanied her as far as Eyemouth on her return journey. From thence she went to Coldingham for a night, and, by way of Dunbar and Tantallon, on to Craigmillar Castle, reaching there on the 20th of November. Its gaunt grey walls face us still, when we look south from Edinburgh, and on chill winter days, when the trees are etched in purple against the snow and all the hills are white, we can see the Queen gazing out, with cheerless heart, from her high windows at the cheerless landscape.

'I am tired of my life,' she many times told Le Croc while she stayed there. 'Would that I had died at Jedworth!' was her bitter cry still later, when her courage had all but ebbed away.

Affairs marched after that court at Jedburgh. In intimacy and in power—in what else, God alone knows—Bothwell continued to rise. It may have been the expulsive power of a new affection—at last,

she may have thought, there had come to her the glorious mastery of a real love—that rendered Mary's dissolute boy-husband more odious in her eyes. More probably it was that the scales of illusion had dropped from them, and that to her had befallen one of the most hideous calamities that can come to man or to woman—the tragedy of having to look, a living creature, at the corpse of a dead love.

In December Darnley caught a virulent form of smallpox and was laid up in the house of his father, the Earl of Lennox, at Glasgow. Mary wrote to him, offering to come and see him—and it took a brave woman to make the offer. A verbal message came back to her through a groom.

'Tell the Queen,' Darnley said, 'that I wish that Glasgow might be Hermitage, and I the Earl of Bothwell as I lie here, and I doubt not that she would be quickly with me undesired.'

Yet she brooked the unpardonable insult and went to see him in his sick-chamber, all his boyish grace of pink-cheeked comeliness departed from him, loathsome and unsightly, in a taffeta mask to protect his disfigurement. Together they returned from Glasgow, and a raven left one of the many gallows trees that then, with their ghastly burdens, dotted the highways, and followed the royal train to light on the roof at Kirk o' Field, there to prophesy doom by its sinister croaking.

Less than a month later, Darnley lay dead at Kirk o' Field. The Borders had not been behindhand in providing assassins. In Rizzio's murder, Ker of Faldonside, two Tweedies of Drummelzier, a Johnston, a Cockburn, and many Douglases took part. Besides James Hepburn, Lord Bothwell, there were in the band that put a sudden end to the debaucheries and insolences of a depraved and diseased weakling, two Ormistons, Hepburn of Bowton, and young Hay of Talla.

'Wild your cradle glen,
Young Hay of Talla;
Stern the wild wind's roar
Round the old peel tower,
Young Hay of Talla.

. . . . .

Night round Kirk o' Field,
Young Hay of Talla;
Light faint in the room,
Darnley sleeps in the gloom,
Young Hay of Talla.

. . . . .

Ah! the young form moves,
Young Hay of Talla;
Hold him grim,—hold grim,
Till quivers not a limb,
Young Hay of Talla.

. . . . .

Now the dread deed's done,
Young Hay of Talla;
Throw the corpse o'er the wall,
Give it dead dog's fall,
Young Hay of Talla.'

Quickly on to her doom thereafter hurried Mary Queen of Scots. The ten days before her marriage with Bothwell, when, possibly, she fancied she had at length a lover whose passion was as fierce as the waves of the grey sea that beat against the outer walls of the castle of Dunbar where she stayed with him, whose love was as strong as his passion, and whose truth and tenderness were unending, was possibly the only time when happiness was truly hers—if hers it could have been with a pale, accusing ghost always making a third. A wedding-day when she wept and asked for a knife to kill herself, defeat at Carberry, and a hideous welcome in Edinburgh from those who had so lately asked God's blessing on her bonny face, then Loch Leven,—a piteous tale it is. In the dreary year at Loch Leven she was fated once more to look at the corpse of a dead love. Darnley murdered her love for him, and so did Bothwell. She was, as one of the Casket Letters declares, 'the most faythfull lover that ever he had.' Honour, conscience, her throne, herself, she was ready to sacrifice for him who professed himself her lover. The vehemence of his passion had swept her away, and now she found that once again she had given her gold for counters, and that the man whom she had endowed with the graces of strength and faithfulness was a moral weakling, false and faithless, one to whom love was but another name for lust, whose only

mistress was power—a mistress that he was ready to wade to, knee-deep in blood, and stepping on the bodies of all who crossed his path, could he but at last attain to her.

He had taken refuge in the north with that hoary sinner, his great-uncle, Bishop of Moray, but there he came to blows with the Bishop's illegitimate sons, slew one, and thrust the others out of doors. A pirate's life then seemed to be the life for him, and with this in view he sailed to the Orkneys, seized two ships belonging to an innocent merchant from Bremen who was trading there, dodged the Scottish vessels that came to take him, and might have ended his days as a king of pirates had he not suffered shipwreck on the Norwegian coast. Then did the hand of Fate close upon him. He was cast into prison, at Bergen first, finally at Dragsholm in Zealand, and there his idle body and idle mind conspired together for his undoing. What menacing phantoms may not have crowded round the mad Earl of Bothwell in his prison cell, ere Death claimed him as a prisoner for the bar of that Dread Tribunal where he who feared not man may have cringed at last in dire terror and fearful supplication ?

In April 1568, when spring was breathing to all things promises of resurrection even from the dead, Mary escaped from Loch Leven, and her dead hopes budded once again. But the defeat at Langside

was what her revived courage had to meet. Once again she had to ride with her face to the south—ride, ride desperately, into the Debateable Land. It was a ride of more than a hundred miles that she took then, and for sixty of it she rode with scarcely a break, getting, in Lord Herries's country, a few hours' sleep on the clay floor of a peasant's cottage, and refreshment of some sour milk and oatmeal. Then on again, ever on, till the Solway was in sight, with its long wet sands and grey water, and, on the other side, England, where dwelt her trusty cousin, 'Good Queen Bess,' herself a woman and a queen. Surely from her she might expect mercy. Behind her, she knew, was the fiery death that was meted out for her by those righteous men who professed themselves to be followers of a merciful Christ.

In a little fishing-boat, accompanied by some twenty of her faithful friends, she set sail, leaving the Scottish Border, the last of her kingdom that her eyes were ever to light on, a dim blue line, fading astern.

'Would that I had died at Jedworth!' . . .

For nineteen long years from then, for that hapless sport for the Fates and for men, plot followed plot, as prison followed prison. Always, wherever she went, she had that golden key that unlocks hearts. Wherever she went, in the most amazingly stony soil, she seemed to sow the seed and raise the flower of love.

The love and devotion of her Maries, and of those others whose affection had always been truly hers, were hers to the end. Her friends schemed for her escape; her enemies schemed for her undoing, and friends played into the hands of enemies. The royal mouse in her trap was not for a moment allowed to elude the watchful eyes of her most gracious cousin at the English Court. One has seen many a velvet-pawed cat less vindictive and more humane. At Carlisle, her first prison, Mary made request to her royal kinswoman that she would graciously remedy some of the deficiences of her wardrobe, consequent upon her sudden flight. The request, coming from one who was herself the most open-handedly generous of women, was surely a natural one. Sir Francis Knollys, Mary's gaoler, was present when she opened the parcel that Elizabeth sent in response to the request. It contained two torn shifts, two small pieces of velvet, and two pairs of shoes. Mary's queenly dignity allowed her to say nothing, and Sir Francis—surely 'black affrontit' at his royal mistress—could only mutter that the maid who had been entrusted with the packing of the parcel must have made a mistake. The captive Queen was spared no cruel indignity that feminine malice could invent. Elizabeth had a 'heavy hand,' as her own Warden, Sir Robert Carey, complained.

In the early winter of 1569, the Earls of Northumber-

land and Westmoreland headed a rising in the north of England with the object of setting Mary free and making her their Queen. Those English Catholic gentlemen were ready to risk all for the sake of a noble lady in dire distress. To them the captive Queen was the symbol of their Holy Faith, the royal head and protector of their cherished religion. Dismally did their gallant attempt fail. They risked all, and lost all. The rebel army faded away as wisps of mist fade on the hills, and only the two Earls, Anne, Countess of Northumberland, and four or five others were left together at last to flee for sanctuary across the Border. It was bitter November weather, snow deep on the hills and moors, sleet stinging their faces, as they rode through the rough northern country. On the English side, succour they found none from those in high places who had once been their friends. At Naworth Castle, where Northumberland pled for shelter for his Countess, Leonard Dacre, who had so recently run most vigorously with the hare, was now devotedly hunting with the hounds, and threatened his former friends with pursuit if they did not instantly depart.

'No rebels shall ever be sheltered in *my* house,' said this worthy man.

From the country-people, Catholics all in their inmost hearts, they met with much kindness, and when, late on a dark and stormy night, they reached Liddesdale, they were gallantly welcomed.

'The Lairdis Jok
All with him takis.'

. . . .

'He is weil kend, John of the Syde,
A greater theif did never ride,'

wrote Maitland of Lethington some years previously. John o' the Syde received Lord and Lady Northumberland, Lord Westmoreland stayed with 'the Laird's Jock,' while the rest of the party had for host 'Black Ormiston,' one of the murderers of Darnley, and probably the very blackest of Bothwell's lambs. As far as one can learn, the hospitality of those somewhat notorious Borderers was not proof against the temptation of gently but firmly taking for themselves the horses and superfluous wardrobes of their guests, but, as far as betrayal was concerned, loyal they undoubtedly were. The hunt was up, yet, through the dreary winter, the fugitives, with prices on their heads, escaped detection. Westmoreland, after spending December nights and days in caves and in peat-holes, managed to reach the security of Fernihirst Castle. The Countess of Northumberland, too ill to be removed when pursuit had come too dangerously near, had been left by her unhappy husband to the tender mercies of the Border ruffians, and Black Ormiston promptly took advantage of her unprotectedness to loot everything she and her husband had left to them—jewels, clothes, and money—leaving her with

scarcely enough to cover her on her bracken bed. But to her came generous aid, and that from a house that had long been at daggers drawn with the house of Percy. The Kers of Fernihirst got word of her plight, and Ker rode off to the wilds of Liddesdale with a band of picked men. He returned in triumph with the Countess borne on a litter, and from the ladies of the house of him who had been her husband's enemy the Countess received the tenderest of care and of sympathy. From Fernihirst she went to Home Castle, where, also, she was an honoured guest. But when the Earl unwillingly tore himself away from his wife, he parted from her forever. Shameful to this day is the name of the Armstrong who betrayed the guest who trusted him.

Between Canobie and Newcastleton lay Harelaw, the peel tower of Hector Armstrong, who, in days when he was a hunted reiver, and Northumberland a Warden of the Marches, had once been shown mercy by the Earl. Thither Northumberland fled for shelter, but the blood-money offered by Elizabeth proved too much for Hector, and he sold into the hands of the Regent Moray him who had once spared his own life. Westmoreland, and an angry little company of Borderers, Scots and English, made a gallant attempt at a rescue. Near Langholm they overtook Northumberland and his escort, and slew Captain John Borthwick, who had made the arrest,

but they were too sorely outnumbered to do more than leave their marks on some of the captors, and were forced to retreat. The Earl of Northumberland, one of the most just, upright, and merciful men that ever captained a Warden's barque in the Borders' stormy sea, was, after a yet more treacherous betrayal, beheaded in the prison of York two years later, and his head put to bleach on a spike of the Micklegate Bar. His name is now unknown to the Border peasant, but not so the name of Hector Armstrong. To this day 'to take Hector's cloak' is the Border expression for one who betrays his friend. Shamed was every true Borderer that an Armstrong should so have defiled the name of his clan and the honour of the Border. Constable, an English spy, reporting the conversation of some of Mary's partisans in Fernihirst's house at Jedburgh, said that 'Hector of Harelaw's head was wished to have been eaten amongst us for supper.'

To Mary, in prison, news of the failure of the Northern Rising must have been a bitter blow indeed. Her eyes were red and swollen with weeping for many a day thereafter. It was, truly, dead low tide for the fortunes of the Queen. To those who had taken, or were supposed to have taken, an active part in the Rebellion, Elizabeth was relentlessly, mercilessly unsparing. Mr. Justice Jeffreys has come down to our own times as a monster who revelled in a Bloody

Assize. 'Good Queen Bess' retains the spotless reputation of a high-minded virgin queen, but there was no satisfying her in her demand for a bloody vengeance upon all those who had dared to defy her authority and to put their swords at the service of a queen whose peccancies may have been the cause of her royal cousin's stringent disapproval, but whose beauty and power of winning the devotion of men was certainly the cause of her malicious hatred. In Northumberland Sir George Bowes boasted that in less than a fortnight he had made an end of six hundred rebels. 'The best fruite a tree can bear is a dead traytour,' was his merry jest. In all, more than two thousand persons paid with their lives the penalty of their devotion to a hopeless cause, and still Queen Elizabeth urged her representatives on to further efforts.

On January 14th, 1570, the Regent Moray, who shares with his contemporary, Queen Elizabeth, the title 'Good,' was assassinated. Mary's followers on the Border did not let the grass grow under their feet. On January 15th Buccleuch, Fernihirst, Westmoreland, and some others of those Englishmen who in Scotland had escaped the vengeance of their queen, rode with two thousand horse across the Border, burning, slaying, and destroying, and returned with a large booty. This was too much for Elizabeth. Scotland, too, must be punished for its defiance. An army under Sussex

was despatched three months later, and Scotland was harried as far north as Lanarkshire. Buccleuch and Fernihirst were the chief objects of her vengeance —Ker of Cessford made his peace with her in time. 'Burn for the Queen! Plunder for yourselves!' was the soldiers' royal commission. With Berwick for starting-point, the army marched along the Cheviot line into Teviotdale, dead men and mouldering ruins marking the route they took. They left, wrote Lord Hunsdon, one of their leaders, 'neythar castell, towne, nor tower unburnt' until they came to Jedburgh. For a breadth of a couple of miles on either side of the Teviot the destruction was carried on by one party of troops, while another detachment began at the head of Coquet and burned all that there was to burn for four miles on either side of Oxnam Water. Near Moss Tower, belonging to Buccleuch, were some caves, and there the country-folk had hidden all their worldly goods, and themselves sought safety. To burn down the peel tower was not, however, enough to satisfy this predatory army, and the caves were sought for and besieged. 'Very valyantly' was the siege resisted for two or three hours by a handful of defenders, but victory had, of necessity, to fall at last to the English army. Crailing Tower, where Fernihirst's mother dwelt, was razed, but the castle of Fernihirst they could not succeed in blowing up, and had to content themselves with wrecking it

as far as possible by means of destructively wielded crowbars and pickaxes. As they drew near Hawick, where they expected to spend the night, smoke was before them instead of behind. Sooner than that the English should find food and shelter in their town, the Hawick people had torn the thatch from off their houses, piled it in the streets and fired it, and its pungent smell and the blinding clouds of its black reek were what greeted the punitive army. The townspeople themselves had vanished in the thick woods up amongst the hills, so also had all goods worth the taking, nor was any provender for man or horse to be found. It was an angry army that fetched water to quench the bonfire, and bivouacked that night with smarting eyes on 'suche vyttells' as remained to them. Watchers far up on the hills saw a fresh blaze when morning came.

'We burnt the hole towne, savynge one house of Dumlaneryk's,' writes Elizabeth's trusty officer—Douglas of Drumlanrig being one of the worldly-wise opponents of Queen Mary, and his house, the Tower Inn, still remains to remind us of his wisdom.

The adjoining villages and farmsteads were also destroyed with a hearty will, and Sussex, Hunsdon, and a strong party of horse rode up the valley to Branxholm, to wreak their vengeance on the bold Buccleuch.

It was 'a very stronge howse and well sett,' and

'very plesant gardens and orchards abowt ytt, and well kept; but all destroyd,' says Hunsdon.

Just because every stone of his home, the home of his ancestors, was dear to his heart; just because the care of his pleasant gardens and his fruit-trees meant so much to him, Buccleuch was not going to allow Branxholm to furnish sport for the ravaging army of a vindictive queen. Himself he had destroyed those fair policies, where primroses and periwinkles and wood anemones proclaimed the spring; the orchards in their radiance of pink apple-blossom and snowy pear, and the castle itself stood a blackened ruin. It was burned down by Buccleuch 'as cruelly as ourselves could have burned it,' wrote Hunsdon. So have men, in time of war, slain their wives to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Nothing remained for Sussex and Hunsdon but to blow up the walls that still stood, and to go on with their work, probably giving the people of Bowmont Water and by the banks of the Kale an extra share of attention because of the deeds of the men of Hawick and their overlord. The expedition left Berwick on a Monday evening and returned late on Saturday night, having in that time destroyed fifty strong castles and peels, and above three hundred towns, villages, and farmsteads — a pleasant week's work, and, according to Hunsdon in his report, a 'most honourable revenge' for her Majesty of England.

In the following year, 1571, when the kingdom of Scotland was sadly divided against itself, a herald made a proclamation at the Cross of Jedburgh in the name of Mary Queen of Scots — a rash proceeding, for Jedburgh had given Sussex and his Englishmen a kindly welcome. The Provost of the town may have had honest convictions as to the unrighteousness of Mary's cause and the strong claims of her infant son, who, poor babe, was not then exactly in a position to govern. When holding a Parliament in Stirling that year, those wandering, round eyes of his were caught by a gap in the roof. 'There is a hole in this Parliament,' said the five-year-old ruler. But whatever were the Provost's convictions or sentiments of enthusiastic loyalty to Mary Stuart's little son, he apparently knew neither how to play the game, nor owned any of the feelings of a gentleman. The herald was seized by many rough hands, forced to eat his proclamation, and was then unbreeched and beaten like a naughty schoolboy, with a bridle-strap wielded by the Provost himself. Buccleuch, Fernihirst, and their followers indignantly flew to arms to avenge the insult, but the townspeople, backed by Ker of Cessford, and supported by troops under Ruthven, too greatly outnumbered them, and they had to retreat, not without losing several of their men as prisoners. The good people of Jedburgh and their Provost were, however, not allowed to go

unpunished. Fernihirst hanged ten of them, as a lesson in manners, and destroyed with fire the stock of provisions that they had laid up for the winter.

In September of that year Buccleuch and Fernihirst, with many another sturdy Borderer, took part in the surprise assault on Stirling, when the Regent Lennox met his death. For the short time that victory was with them — ere the reivers' love of looting had lost for them a supreme chance—it seemed as though the long struggle were about to be ended, and that the swords that were to free their Queen and place her on her throne were once more to be those of her Border lords.

But sixteen weary years had still to drag past the Queen with their leaden feet before she won her freedom.

In Scotland, in 1586, there was seen, so the superstitious alleged, 'a bloody head dancing in the air,' a gloomy portent of the death of the Scottish Queen.

> 'The winding-sheet had passed her breast
> And risen round her throat.'

Never could Mary have been free from that vision during the dreary years of her captivity, for never did it cease to be the desired vision of her sister queen and most bitter enemy. In that year Fernihirst died. 'I am sorie that he and some betters had not been hanged,' wrote the English Warden of the Middle

March. In him the Queen lost one of the trustiest of her friends on the Border. Buccleuch, at the age of twenty-five, had died twelve years earlier, 'depairtit at God's plesour,' as the inscription at Branxholm has it. James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, died in prison in April 1578, but his nephew and successor, Francis Stuart, Lord Bothwell, was to Mary a true friend, if a tactless one. He was the illegitimate son of Lady Janet Hepburn, Bothwell's sister, and James v. of Scotland, and to the half-sister who had always acted as his guardian he showed more affectionate loyalty than her own son and Darnley's ever displayed.

On a February day in 1587 the end came. The night before, the Queen was given warning to prepare next morning to meet with the Emperor Death. 'Which short warning she took very patiently,' says Sir James Melville. Into her weeping waiting-women and sad-faced men attendants she inspired some of the splendid, self-forgetful courage that was ever her own great possession. The early part of the night she spent in writing letters—to her son, to the King of France, and to others; in making her will, and in doing all that it was possible for her to do for the future comfort and well-being of those whom she loved, or who had been dependent on her. None were forgotten, and then she parcelled what money she had remaining into little bags, writing the owner's

name upon each. The remainder of the night was spent in prayer and meditation. She asked Mrs. Kennedy, her waiting-maid, to read to her, and chose the story of the Penitent Thief.

'May my Saviour have mercy on me and remember me, and have mercy on me as He had on him at the hour of his death,' she said.

The story of that dark morning is one that we must forget if we are ever to judge with dispassionate calmness those who compassed Mary Stuart's death. Her magnificent fortitude and courage, her exquisite unselfishness, her tender desire that the feelings of those who cared for her might as far as possible be spared, her little touch of humour at the very end, the merciless cruelty of those who, even at the eleventh hour, roughly insulted the faith in which she died,—all these are things that make intemperate partisans for Queen Mary, and equally intemperate haters of the queen who was called 'Good.'

When, after some hideous delays, the axe at last had fallen, the executioner held up the little head, its head-dress of flowing lawn torn from it. And those who looked on the piteous sight saw that, ere merciful Death had come to give her rest, cruel Life had pinched and aged the 'sweet face,' upon which her people had once called down God's blessing, and made her radiant fair hair white as that of an old woman.

'I have immortal longings in me,' said the dying Cleopatra. Another great queen had now put on immortality. The tragedy of Mary Stuart was ended. A little shivering pet dog that had cowered against her skirts as she gallantly met her doom, was the last of her friends to be thrust away from her by hands as remorseless as the hands of Fate.

Surely, that night, sighing spirits must have held court at Holyrood. The winds sobbed and wailed through the glens and cleughs of snow-clad Teviotdale, the flooded rivers moaned. Did there, perchance, ride out from the grey house in the Backgate of Jedburgh a slim, girlish figure on a white palfrey—Death's pale horse—making the wild things on the Liddesdale hills fly in fear as horse and rider galloped past, across the dark moors, down the valley, to Hermitage?

In Scotland the news of Mary's death raised a storm of impotent fury. Impotent it was, because, although the description of his mother's death, by Mrs. Kennedy, caused him to become very pensive for almost a day and to forgo his supper, the King had at heart neither love for a mother he barely knew, nor the desire to have war with England. The revenge of 'fire and swords' at first threatened, flickered out, as many threats are apt to do, in the cooling atmosphere of time.

Francis Stuart, Lord Bothwell, who declared that

the only suitable 'dule weed' for his Queen was a coat of mail, found some slight comfort by straightway riding into England and making a bloody raid. Other reivers did the same, but no amount of slaying and plundering could bring back the Queen to her own.

The dule weed still is worn by those of her nation in whose hearts Mary Queen of Scots forever must find a sure place. At a higher tribunal than this world knows, judgment on her and upon those who condemned her must be passed. And of another woman who was a sinner did not the Judge of all once say—'Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much.'

## CHAPTER IX

### BORDER FEUDS

They shot him dead at the Nine-Stane Rig,
Beside the Headless Cross,
And they left him lying in his blood,
Upon the moor and moss.

. . . . .

They dug his grave but a bare foot deep,
By the edge of the Nine-Stane burn,
And they covered him o'er wi' the heather flower,
The moss and the lady fern.

SURTEES.

IT was inevitable, during the long years when Scotland was kingless, that certain families should attain to great power, while others were wiped out altogether. It was a case of the survival of the fittest—fitness, unfortunately, not always meaning the ascendancy of the knight most without fear and without reproach.

It would have been well for Scotland had the blood spilled by her people been only that of her enemies, but in times of peace the great families kept their hands in by fighting with each other. There were feuds innumerable, vendettas as cruelly remorseless as those of Corsican or Sicilian peasant. 'Blood washes out blood' was an axiom as closely adhered

to on the Scottish Border as it has ever been in Sicily.

For many a year continual bloodshed came from jealousies, leading to hot words and then to blows, and from that unyielding pride with the possession of which other nations twitted the Scottish people. A French proverb in the sixteenth century was *Il est fier comme ung Escossoys*—'He is as proud as a Scot,'—and one way in which the Scots showed their pride was by demanding an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. According to the delightfully simple code of manners of the times there were certain insults for which the death of the offender was the only possible atonement. This apology was one that was scarcely likely to be proffered by the offender himself, and when reparation was forced upon him it was a point of honour with his family and relations to see that his death was avenged. The Highland clans were punctilious in this respect. The clans of the Border were not one whit behind them. 'Hawks dinna pyke oot hawks' een' was a proverb that only held good among the reiving families when those families had no cause of quarrel among themselves. The 'plague of deadly feud,' wrote Bishop Lesly, 'though a general calamity through the kingdom, is chiefly proper to these people.' 'Naughty, evil, unruly, and misdemeaned' was an English Warden's description of the men of the Marches in

1559, and in no way did they show their unruliness more plainly than in their total lack of respect for all the laws of the land in a feud in which their own clan was involved. Each clan was in reality a large family, and if a member of that family suffered injury, it was an injury that touched the pride of every one of his brethren. The existence of the 'to-names' that were so abundant on the Border show how real a thing their clanship was. It was unnecessary to state that a man's surname was Scott, Elliot, Armstrong, or whatever the case might be, when Scotts, Elliots, and Armstrongs were members of a large, well-disciplined regiment of light horsemen, owning the same surname and the same chief. There was 'The Laird's Jock,' 'Jock o' the Syde,' 'Kinmont Will,' 'Archie Fire-the-Braes,' 'Gennete's Tom,' 'Nebless Clemy,' 'Red-neb Hob,' 'Ill-drowned Geordie,' 'Jock Half-lugs,' 'Will's Archie,' 'Eddie Great-legs,' 'Bessie's Andrew,' 'Young Dand,' 'Gray Will,' 'Gray Will's Jim,' 'Curst Hob,' 'Ill-will's Sandy,' 'Gibb's Geordie's Francie,' 'The Lady's Hob,' 'Peggie's Wattie,' 'Gleed John,' 'Black Jock,' and many a score of others whose surnames probably only required mention when their owners stood at the gallows' foot.

During the minority of James the Fifth, a blood-feud of handsome proportions was that which raged between the Duke of Albany and his partisans and the house of Home—during the fifteenth and sixteenth

centuries the most powerful family in Berwickshire. The Earl of Home and two of his brothers had been treacherously done to death at the instigation of the Regent Albany. Sir Anthony D'Arcy, Seigneur de la Bastie, a French knight of such personal charms that in his own land he was known as the 'Seigneur de la Beauté,' was created by Albany Governor of Lothian and Warden of the Eastern Marches, and upon him were bestowed the castles of Dunbar and of Home. To the Home clan it must have been intolerable to feel that the estates and castles of their murdered chief were held by a foreigner whose only claim to rule in the Border was his friendship with their arch-enemy. They had no chance of forgetting what they owed to Albany, nor of healing the wounds in their family pride by lack of memory, for there are few spots on the Border from which one cannot see Home Castle, a lonely watch-tower, queening it over the Merse. The Homes bided their time. On a September day in 1517, on his way to Dunbar from holding a court at Kelso, De la Bastie had to ride a fearful race with his pursuers. A few miles from Duns, his horse, one of the late Earl's best steeds, much encumbered by gorgeous French trappings, stumbled and fell. A 'little foot page' of Home of Wedderburn, they say, who had joined in the hunt without permission on one of his master's horses, was first man up, but two of the Homes were close

behind, and by them De la Bastie was slain. His head was hacked off, and 'because his Hair was long, like Womens, and plat on a Head-Lace, David Home of Wedderburn knit it on his Saddle-Bow.' With his bloody trophy dangling by him Home rode to Duns, there to have it stuck up on a pole for all enemies of the house of Home to gloat upon until such time as it might be put to bleach upon the battlements of Home Castle. The body of the Seigneur is buried where he fell, at the spot that is known as 'Bawtie's Grave' to this day.

'The leddies o' France may wail and mourn,
May wail and mourn fu' sair,
For the bonny Bawtie's lang brown locks
They 'll ne'er see waving mair.'

The feud between the houses of Scott and Ker was one in which the Homes also took a part. It is hard to say how the quarrel between those two houses arose. It was

'An endless, fruitless feud, I wot,
With vengeance vowed in every weather,
Between the Cessfords and the Scott,
A foolish quarrel long begot.'

In 1548, when the aged Lady of Buccleuch, herself a Ker, was burned to death in the Tower of Catslack, Ker of Graden and others of the Ker clan were with Lord Grey, the English Warden, aiding him in his destructive work. Her death was scarcely likely

to make her son regard his enemies with any of the forgiving feelings of Christian charity. The Buccleuch of that day was a man of whom Satchells says that he

> 'Durst have shewn his face
> To him that was as stout as Hercules.'

At Flodden and at Pinkie he fought, and his affrays with the Kers led the Queen-Dowager to imprison both him and Ker of Cessford in Edinburgh Castle.

'I thought best to put them both in the Castle of Edinburgh,' she wrote . . . 'and not to let them break the borders for their evil will among themselves.'

In 1526 the constantly smouldering hatred of the Scotts and Kers was suddenly sent blazing up in flames that for many a year were not extinguished. King James the Fifth had been at Jedburgh, holding a Justice Court, and had there found that Justice was a virtue which on the Border was then singularly conspicuous by its absence. By means of bribery it was just possible for the King to have some of his laws administered, but even bribery failed when judgment had to be passed on any of the kin, friends, or servants of Douglas, Earl of Angus. The bondage he was under to the man whom his widowed mother had married, must long have galled the boy-king, and from Jedburgh he wrote secretly to Scott of Buccleuch, known better as 'Wicked Wat of Branx-

holm,' to meet him at Melrose with a rescue party, and free him once and for all from the power of the Douglases. The clans of Home and of Ker had acted as escort to Angus and the King to Melrose, where they slept, and in the grey dawn of the morning Lord Home and the Lairds of Cessford and of Fernihirst had taken leave of their sovereign and ridden off, when James had visible proof that Buccleuch had received his letter. Sir Walter Scott had raised an army of something between six hundred and one thousand horse, Scotts, Elliots, and Armstrongs, and advancing over the brow of the hill that lies to the south above Darnick, the astonished Angus now saw this company. To him, with Kers and Homes away, remained three hundred men, and instead of awaiting the attack, Angus sent forward a herald to inquire the will of Buccleuch, and to bid him begone. Buccleuch, in no warlike guise, but wearing a leathern coat and black bonnet, proudly made answer that, according to Border custom, he came to show his clan to the King, and that, moreover, he knew better than did Angus what were the royal desires.

'Sir,' then said Angus to the King, 'yon is Buccleuch, and thieves of Annandale with him, to unbeset your grace from the gate. I avow to God, they shall either fight or flee; and ye shall tarry here on this knowe, and my brother George with you, with any other company ye please; and I shall pass

and put yon thieves off the ground, and rid the gate unto your grace, or else die for it.'

The little battle of Darnick was a fierce one. Buccleuch and his men fought on foot, and how it would have ended who can say, if the Homes and Kers had not got word of the fray ere they had ridden too far. Their reinforcement of fourscore men turned the day, and Buccleuch and his army had to flee, with the Kers in hot pursuit. At the foot of a steep path Ker of Cessford stumbled and fell, and was promptly slain by Elliot of Stobs, a follower of Buccleuch, who is scarcely to be blamed when we consider the fact that eighty of Buccleuch's clan had fallen that morning, and that the chief himself was wounded. 'Turn Again' is still the name of the spot on the Abbotsford estate where

> 'Gallant Cessford's life-blood dear
> Reeked on dark Elliot's Border spear,'

and where the pursuit was stayed.

The blood that was spilt on both sides that day had thereafter to be atoned for with a vengeance by Kers and by Scotts. Elliot, the actual culprit, was made to pay the penalty for his rash blow by being arraigned in Edinburgh for 'treasonably coming against his sovereign lord the king in proper person,' and for 'common theft and reset of theft,' and was, of course, convicted and hanged. Angus could do no

less for his friends, the Kers. The Scotts and Kers hated each other before the fight; after it their hatred knew no bounds. In 1530, to try to put an end to the constant warfare between the clans, those in high places tried to bring their affairs to a permanent settlement by the employment of peaceful methods. Sir Walter Scott was a widower, and it was suggested that he should marry Janet Ker, daughter of Andrew Ker of Fernihirst. Moreover, the heads of the clans of Scott and Ker had to pledge themselves to perform a pilgrimage to the four chief places of devotion in Scotland—Scone, Dundee, Paisley, and Melrose—there to pray for the souls of those who had fallen in the fight; while Sir Walter Scott was to appoint a chaplain 'to say a mass daily whenever Sir Walter Ker and his friends might fix on' for the space of five years, that Cessford might the more easily pass through Purgatory; while the Kers had to have daily masses said for three years for the souls of the slain Scots and their friends, at a place appointed by Buccleuch. In spite of this marriage, the cessation from hostilities was a very transient one, and proved that without shedding of blood the Borderer did not believe in honourable justice having been done. Twenty-six years after Cessford was slain, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, as he walked down the High Street of Edinburgh one October evening, was set upon by a party of the Kers and their friends, and

HOME CASTLE

there murdered. Apparently he was given no fair chance of defending himself. While he tried to come to grips with John Home of Cowdenknowes, Home thrust his sword through his body, at the same time calling to Ker of Cessford, 'Strike, traitor, a stroke for thy father's sake!' Home then cast the body of the gallant old chief in at the door of a booth, saying, 'Lie there, with my malison, for I had rather gang by thy grave than thy door.' Two servants of Home's, passing later, found Buccleuch not yet dead, stabbed him three or four times through the body, and robbed him of his cloak and steel cap. Such tulzies were frequent in the High Street, and it was an easy matter for Ker and his fellow-assassins to ride off to the Border on horses provided by Pringle of Torwoodlee. The servants who had given the last murderous thrusts to the helpless man were asked, as they carried off their booty, what the fray had been about. 'There was ane lad fallen,' they said, and went their way.

The Scotts were not slow in showing their wrath. According to John Knox, whose righteous soul was vexed by the force and frequency of the Border chiefs' oaths, Buccleuch was 'a bloody man,' but, if so it was, he was a hero to his clan. The lives of even those friends of the Kers who had had no hand in the matter were forfeit. It was enough for the Scotts that a man was a friend, a kinsman, or a servant of

the house of Cessford. Death was his portion, and destruction that of his worldly goods. The Kers were declared rebels, in itself a sufficiently severe punishment for their crime, but the innocent suffered with the guilty, and 'none of them dared, from fear of their lives, to come to kirk, market, nor to the governor to ask a remedy from him.' Yet though they were at enmity with each other, to Queen and to country the Scotts and Kers were leal and true. Not long after the battle of Pinkie, where he was present with a large body of retainers, Buccleuch and the Kers entered into a bond to fight together against their 'auld ennemies of England' unto their lives' end. Yet even this bond was no drag upon the family feud.

Many an innocent man had paid for the deaths of Ker of Cessford and Scott of Buccleuch ere, in 1564, an attempt was again made by certain peace-makers to stanch this ever-bleeding family feud by means of acts of public penitence and the sound of marriage-bells. It was arranged that a son of Cessford should marry a sister of young Sir Walter Scott, and that his aunt should be given in wedlock to a son of Ker of Faldonside. Failing these marriages others were arranged, but none of them came off. Possibly the contracting parties may have insisted on having some say in the matter, and have been unable to see why clan warfare should be carried into

family life. 'Blessed are the peacemakers' is a beatitude before which even a turbulent Border spirit may have bowed. 'Blessed are the match-makers' was quite another thing, and it must have been a little risky to attempt to make matches in the Border in those reiving days. In addition to the matrimonial arrangements it was further ordained that Sir William Ker of Cessford must appear before the assembled congregation at a forenoon service at St. Giles', and there, reverently, upon his knees, ask God's forgiveness for the murder of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch. Thereafter—a much harder task—he had to beg for pardon from young Buccleuch, his kinsmen and friends, and promise 'in the name and fear of God, that he and his friends should truly keep their part of the contract, and should stand true friends to Buccleuch and his friends in all time coming.'

Whether this clause in the pact was carried out to the letter or not, it would seem that Scotts and Kers of the succeeding generation were, at least, no longer openly at daggers drawn. Sir Walter Scott of Branxholm, of Kinmont Willie fame, married in 1586 a daughter of Cessford, sister of 'Habby Ker,' afterwards first Earl of Roxburghe. It may have been through Margaret Ker that peace came at last to the antagonistic clans, for of her whom she called her 'best sester,' her sister, Lady Broughton, in 1645

wrote 'sche was a goud Kerr, if ever ther wos any.'

As Wardens of the Marches, in spite of their band against a common enemy, Ker and Buccleuch frequently came into collision, and every now and again that old fire of family enmity would give signs of blazing up afresh. There exists in the State Records a heated correspondence between the brothers-in-law, when Ker had obviously not 'played the game,' and when Buccleuch was a prisoner in Berwick without the companionship of Ker, whose freedom was due to the fact that he held different ideas of honour from those of the bold Buccleuch. A hostile letter from captivity is signed 'Your brother in lawe Baclugh.' Ker's angry reply is signed 'Yr br. in yr owne termes Robt. Kerre.' Buccleuch's yet more indignant answer ends with 'Yr br. in na termes, Buclugh.'

The inevitable consequence of this paper warfare was a challenge to a duel, sent from Ker through the Master of Orkney. But Sir John Carey, Governor of Berwick, wisely made any reply on the part of Buccleuch impossible by retaining the bearer of the challenge a prisoner. 'Bauclugh is his mortall enemy,' said Carey, writing of Ker to Cecil.

But, in time, at last even those sparks ceased to fly upwards. The flame of enmity died out, and we live in days when Scotts and Kers hunt the fox on the

Border in amity together, and the old blood-feud has been long forgotten.

While the feud still raged, the Scots had to encounter yet another enemy amongst their own kin.

In the autumn of 1564 a Scott was slain by some of the Elliot clan, and for many a day thereafter the Scotts and Elliots were constantly at each other's throats. So furiously was the vendetta pursued that the Lords of Council felt it necessary to take stringent measures for its suppression. On the 24th of October of that year five of the Scotts and Elliots were condemned to death, and three of them were beheaded that very night by the flare of torches on the Castle Hill. The Elliots waited till the spring of the year, and then avenged themselves upon those who had led their kinsmen to the block by invading the Scott country, burning and plundering, and slaying several men. The Scotts appealed to the Court to be permitted to take revenge, and took it, meantime, without sanction. Blow was fairly given for blow. A Scott paid with his life for an Elliot's death, and an Elliot for a Scott's. In May 1585 ten miles of Buccleuch's land was burned and spoiled by the Elliots, many men were slain, and several women and children. What wonder that about that time Lord Hunsdon wrote of the gentlemen of the English side of the Border that they were 'so affrayde of deadly feedes, as whensoever their ys any fraye and any goods

taken away, nott one that will ryse to helpe his neighbour, but hee whose goods ys taken awaye—thoughe the Scottes come by their doares with the spoyle.' However, even the Montagues and the Capulets probably arrived at peace in the end, and in December 1601 the English Warden complains that 'the Scotts and Elliots have again been spoiling the Grahams.'

Never, apparently, did the Scott clan entirely have its 'fill o' fechtin'.' It was not enough for them to run feuds with their own countrymen and to be at constant enmity with the English. They had, in addition, to carry on a lively vendetta with the Charltons, a powerful Tynedale family. In 1595, in a letter to Lord Burghley, Sir John Carey explained the reason of Buccleuch's warlike attitude. It would seem that 'long synce, in a warr tyme,' the Tynedale men had raided his grandfather's land, taken his grandfather prisoner, killed several of his retainers, and—most dire insult of all—'they took awaye his grandfather's shworde and wold never lett him have ytt synce.' 'This,' writes Carey, 'sayth he, is the quarrell.'

A most lively quarrel it was, too, and one for the sake of which many a man laid down his life through various generations. But the Scotts fought in vain. At Hesleyside, in North Tynedale, Buccleuch's good sword still remains.

At one time, on the English side, the Charltons, Fenwicks, Herons, Shafftownes, and Milbornes were all at feud, while, on the Scottish side, Elliots and Armstrongs, Nixons, Olivers, Turnbulls, and Croziers were at each other's throats.

Up Tweedside there ran for many a year a feud that claimed much good blood before it finally smouldered out. The Tweedies of Drummelzier, in Peeblesshire, were a gallant family of Border freebooters, ready to share in any slaughter that was going. They were a prideful clan who, in the reign of James the Fifth, rode their forays all mounted on well-matched white horses, a predatory regiment of Border ancestors for the Scots Greys.

'Wm. Twedy of Drummelzeare and Adam Twedy of Dreva' were two of the Borderers who helped to do Rizzio to death. The Veitches—once the De Vaches of Normandy—were another Peeblesshire family of dauntless spirit, and, not unnaturally, representatives of the families of Tweedy and of Veitch came to blows. The original cause of quarrel seems to have been a question of the ownership of certain lands. The feud had for some time run its course when, early one June morning, there was an accidental encounter between Veitch of Dawyck and the laird of Drummelzier in one of the haughs by the Tweed. Of course they fought. Dawyck proved victor, and Tweed sang her 'siller sang' that morning without

disturbing the sleep of Drummelzier, who lay near where his blood had reddened the snowy blossom of a hawthorn that grew down by the river.

In 1590 the Veitches held the honour in this family quarrel. The head of the clan, known as the 'Deil of Dawyck,' was an immensely powerful man, and had managed to daunton even such turbulent raiders as the Tweedies of Drummelzier.

On an evil day for him, young Patrick Veitch, the 'Deil's' son, rode alone into Peebles. Young Tweedy of Drummelzier saw him, and quickly passed the word to five other men of his own clan—one of them one of Rizzio's murderers—and to two Crichtons and a Porteous, his friends. There were nine to one, and this murder band of nine divided—one division galloping on to Neidpath Castle, the other remaining in the town to stalk their prey. As young Dawyck rode through the gorge of the Tweed at Neidpath, on his homeward way, he found one party awaiting him, and, ere he could meet the heavy odds in gallant fight, a clatter of horses' hoofs behind him told him that it was not battle, but murder and sudden death that was his lot. Such were the manners of the time, and it is surprising to learn that the murderers were imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. But Scott of Buccleuch and other cautioners appeared on their behalf, and they were not long in regaining liberty. Four days after Patrick Veitch was slain,

IN THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW

Veitch of North Synton and another met John Tweedy, Tutor of Drummelzier, in the High Street of Edinburgh. No time was lost by Synton, and the Tutor speedily lay dead in the kennel, a rapier thrust through his heart. Shortly afterwards the clan Tweedy took their revenge for this murder. The husband of Marie Veitch of Dawyck, Geddes by name, had been for eight days in Edinburgh, and during that time had constantly come across the Tweedies, who showed him openly no ill-will. The hapless man did not realise the cruelty of a blood-feud, and was quite unconscious of the fact that wherever he went spies followed him, and that Death's black shadow darkened his every footfall. He was having his horse shod at the booth of a certain 'Dand Lindsay' in the Cowgate, 'being altogidder cairles of his awne suretie,' when nine of his family's enemies closed round him, and a bullet through his back laid him stark and dead. His widow's bitter complaint was not only the loss of her own man, but because the Tweedies 'had ever socht,' and sought still, her family's 'utter wrak and exterminioun.'

'The deadly feud between the Veitches and the Tweedies is still unreconciled,' says a proclamation of James VI. dated March 1611, and steps are suggested to compel 'the principalls of either surname' to bind themselves and their clans to be at peace for evermore.

Where honour was concerned, even one branch of the Scotts was ready to wage war against another

until blood had wiped away the alleged stain. A Scott of Oakwood, so says tradition, eloped with Grizel Scott of Thirlestane. Investigation in the cold light of later days has failed to prove whether young Scott was the son of 'Auld Wat' or not, but the fact remains that on October 22, 1616, four gentlemen of the name of Scott were summoned at the Kirk of the Forest 'to hear themselves excommunicat for the horrible slaughter of Wr. Scott.'

The ballad of *The Dowie Dens of Yarrow* is responsible for all that we know of the details of the spilling of blood that was to wash out supposed dishonour. It is one of the ballads that turn the murmur of Yarrow's hazel-brown stream into a dirge, and that help to make the spirit that haunts its heathery hills and its woods of dark firs and silvery birches one of brooding melancholy.

According to the ballad, the luckless bridegroom, single-handed, had to encounter nine Scotts of his bride's family on 'the dowie houms of Yarrow,' and there was treacherously done to death. Be it fact, or be it fancy, the tale is one that, on the Border at least, must possess immortality, for who does not know the cry of the bride—

> 'O gentle wind, that bloweth south,
> From where my love repaireth,
> Convey a kiss from his dear mouth,
> And tell me how he fareth!'

And still the wail of the heart-broken widow seems to give an added grief to the wind as it soughs down the Dowie Dens of Yarrow—

'But in the glen strive armed men,
They 've wrought me dule and sorrow;
They 've slain—the comeliest knight they 've slain,
He bleeding lies on Yarrow.'

The ballad of the Douglas Tragedy tells yet such another tale.

A daughter of the house of Douglas was carried away, a willing bride, by a wooer who asked no leave of her father, Douglas of Blackhouse in Yarrow. Her father and seven brothers rode in pursuit, by the still easily traceable bridle road across the hills between the Yarrow and the Tweed, and in the heathery glen of the Douglas Burn the lovers were overtaken. A bloody fight ensued, and the father and brothers all were slain beside the old grey stones that probably mark the place of another human sacrifice. The lovers mounted again in the soft moonlight, leaving the dead lying in the deep glen beside the murmuring Douglas Burn.

'O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a' by the licht o' the moon,
Until they cam to yon wan water,
And there they lichted doun.

They lichted doun to tak a drink
O' the spring that ran sae clear;
And doun the stream ran his gude heart's blood,
And sair she 'gan to fear.'

Ere morning dawned the lovers lay dead.

'Lord William was dead lang ere midnight,
Lady Marg'ret lang ere day—
And all true lovers that gang thegither,
May they have mair luck than they!'

Not only in Teviotdale and Tweeddale, and in the 'hopes' of Ettrick and Yarrow, did Scotland's friends fall before the swords that should have fought only for king and for country. In the Western Marches, in the dales of Nith and Annan, Maxwells and Johnstons carried on a feud that it would be hard to surpass in the bloody annals of any land. A quarrel with James VI.'s reigning favourite, the Earl of Arran, in 1585, placed John, seventh Lord Maxwell, on the wrong side of his sovereign's gracious favour. Maxwell was a Romanist, another crime in the Protestant monarch's eyes, and the Warden of the Western Marches, then the Laird of Johnston, was sent to apprehend one for whose family the members of his own house had never cherished any friendly feeling. Two bands of mercenaries were sent from Edinburgh to support the Warden, but Maxwell's half-brother fell on those troops at Crawfordmuir, practically cut them to pieces, and burned Johnston's castle of Lochwood. He would give the Lady Johnston light enough to 'set on her hood,' said the incendiary. Later on, Johnston was taken prisoner, and died soon afterwards of a broken heart, so it is

said. Thus was the feud actively inaugurated. The whims of King James, who bestowed the Wardenship on a Protestant Johnston, then on a Papist Maxwell, fanned the flames. Maxwells and Johnstons were mowed down in their turn, and the hatred steadily grew. In July of 1593 there came to Edinburgh 'certain poor women of the south country, with fifteen bloody shirts, to compleen to the king that their husbands, sons, and servants were cruelly murdered by the Laird of Johnston, themselves spoiled, and nothing left them.' In the same year, the Laird of Johnston having entirely lost the favour of the king by his partisanship with Bothwell, Maxwell was given the welcome royal commission to apprehend him and to work his will on the Johnston clan—'to root out Johnston and the memorie of his name in these boundis.' This was not to be brooked by the Laird Johnston of that day. His kinsman, Buccleuch, was summoned to help him, and with Buccleuch came Elliots, Armstrongs, and Graemes, joyful at the prospect of a good fight. At Lochmaben this force surprised and well-nigh annihilated a party of the Maxwells, and Lord Maxwell had to show his recently found authority by invading Annandale with a force of two thousand men, and proceeding towards Lochwood in order to besiege it. With Maxwell rode the Lairds of Drumlanrig, Closeburn, and many another enemy of the Johnston clan, and on a December day in 1593

the Laird of Johnston and forty horsemen came in sight of this host and drew on a skirmish. But five hundred Johnstons, Scotts, and Elliots lay ambushed, and the skirmish was the signal for them to fall on. The fight took place by the river Dryfe, near Lochmaben, and is known as the battle of Dryfe Sands, and there, it is said, seven hundred of the Maxwells and their men were slain. Even now, in the south country, a 'Lockerbie lick' is the name given to a savage slash on forehead or on skull, for so it was that many a man met his death in Lockerbie or on Dryfe Sands that day. Lord Maxwell himself had to flee, but he was a tall, heavy, elderly man, greatly encumbered by weighty armour, and was overtaken. His pursuers struck him from his horse, and when he, grievously wounded, held out his right hand for quarter, Johnston fiercely shore it off at the wrist and not only bore it off with him as trophy, but also carried with him the bloody head of his enemy. An even uglier tale than this, fortunately less well authenticated, is one of how when Maxwell lay a-dying under some thorn-bushes, Lady Johnston came to the field to see how the day had gone and to minister to the wounded of her kin. From her the dying man begged for aid, but apparently the poison of the blood-feud ran even in the veins of the women. In her hands she carried the heavy keys of her castle, and with them, with all her might, she smote the

helpless supplicant, dashing his brains out. Two thorns still mark the place where Maxwell died—one can but hope by the hand of a man and not by that of a woman to whom he had prayed for mercy. For five years his corpse lay unburied, awaiting the time when his death should be avenged, but in February 1598 the King and Council commanded that it should be laid at rest.

Their chief's death was a big debt for the Maxwells to repay, and their mode of repayment was one that was far from conforming with the rules of chivalry. Each side had struck many blows when, in 1608, Lord Maxwell sought a friendly interview with Sir James Johnston, that they might discuss the causes of enmity in the past and try to arrive at a friendly settlement. Each of the principals took one servant only with him, but with Maxwell came a kinsman of his own name. This fellow, while Lord Maxwell and Sir James were engaged in private conversation some little distance off, fell out, as previously arranged, with Johnston's attendant, and, drawing his 'dag,' sent a shot into him. Sir James quickly turned round to see what had happened, and in an instant fell from his horse with two bullets from Lord Maxwell's pistol in his back. The assassin fled to France, where he remained for four years, but on his return he was betrayed by his kinsman, Sinclair, Earl of Caithness, and was beheaded in Edinburgh in 1613.

The ballad of *Maxwell's Good-night* probably gives us more tender feelings than we might otherwise have towards a man who was undoubtedly guilty of a foully treacherous murder.

'Adieu the lily and the rose,
The primrose fair to see;
Adieu, my ladye, and only joy!
For I may not stay with thee.
Though I have slain the Lord Johnstone
What care I for their feid?
My noble mind their wrath disdains—
He was my father's deid.
Both night and day I laboured oft
Of him avenged to be;
But now I've got what lang I sought
And I may not stay with thee.'

Vengeance—vengeance—vengeance! that was ever the cry of those men of the Border. Never did they seem to consider for a moment the possibility of leaving punishment in the hands of a God who said 'Vengeance is mine—I will repay.'

In the year 1511, at a Wardens' meeting, Sir Robert Ker of Fernihirst was slain by three Englishmen. One of them was delivered up by the English Warden, but the two others escaped. One wily man, Heron by name, succeeded in circulating a report that he had died of the plague, had a mock funeral, and so went free, but young 'Dand' Ker laid upon two of his clan the duty of finding the third of his father's murderers, and of bringing him to Fernihirst,

alive or dead. The assassin had made his way to the midland counties, and there lived in the greatest secrecy and in that constant fear of his life that is the horror of those who now offend members of the Camorra or the Mafia. With as much cunning and as many disguises as Camorrists the avengers of blood tracked him down, found him at last in bed, and made their long journey back through England bearing with them, as ghastly proof that their work had been well done, the head of the murdered man. Eighty years later it was the blood of those who had spilt the blood of their clan that the Kers still demanded. 'Habby Ker' rode into Northumberland to avenge the death of his 'chief man,' who had been taken red-handed driving stolen sheep. The man had been tried, confessed he was 'worthy to dye,' as he had done five murders with his own hand, 'besides so many other murders and stelthes he had been at, he could not reckon them,' and he was put to death. Three days later Habby sought to repay this debt in full. None of the prisoners taken in any of the villages that he and his men rode through were Selbys, Armourers, or Ordes, the men who were responsible for the hanging of three days before, so he let them go. One party drove off some cattle, but when they reached their chief with this booty he bade them drive it back again. 'It was not goods but blood that he desired,' he said, and he vowed that he would be revenged ere he had done.

It was a Lord of Session in Edinburgh, Lord Lauriston, who was a party in one of the famous Lowland feuds, and who put into words his own sentiments and those of his fellow-Borderers with regard to the repayment of family blood debts:

'All is dishonorabell,' quoth Alexander Napier, 'quhair there is not eie for eie and tuith for tuith.' In 1600 young Napier of Merchiston told Scott of Bowhill that he had lost a valuable horse from the stables of his house of Mure. Whether it was a conscience not wholly free from guilt that made Scott so fiercely resent Napier's complaint, no one knows, but Scott fell in a fury, drew his sword, and called upon Napier to defend himself. Napier had meant no insult, nor had he any wish to slay or to be slain by his hasty friend, and he therefore showed a clean pair of heels. Scott went in pursuit, and all day the chase went on, Scott doggedly pursuing Napier, Napier doing what he could to avoid a meeting. In the evening, at a part of the road so narrow that it was impossible for him to double, Napier was run down, and had to fight the duel that had been forced upon him.

'*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*,' and it was Scott, not Napier, who was slain. So obviously was the thrust given in self-defence that for Napier there was no question of trial or punishment, save in the hearts of the Scott clan. He was, apparently,

tried by that tribunal, where family pride sat on the Bench and blindfold Justice pronounced the sentence, and that sentence, of course, was death. Several of the Scotts—amongst them three of Bowhill's brothers—and young Crichton of Sanquhar, waylaid Napier near his house, The Wowmet, some miles out of Edinburgh, and murdered him—righteously executed him, they doubtless thought. There was no suggestion of hanging for them, but, as rebels, they were 'put to the horn'—*i.e.* their property was declared forfeit. Their chief, Scott of Buccleuch, took up their cause, and proposed that they should be pardoned on the understanding that they paid the Napiers £1000 as compensation for the murder of Archibald Napier. Then it was that Alexander Napier pronounced his dictum that all was dishonourable save the usual Border price for the slaughter of a friend. In 1626, when Alexander Napier became Lord Lauriston, the case was still unsettled; but in 1699 William Scott of Thirlestane married Margaret, Baroness Napier of Merchiston, and the Lord Napier and Ettrick of this day takes descent from two families that once so thirsted for each other's blood.

Many a weary year of struggle on the part of lawful authority did it take ere the land was rid of what King Jamie well named 'The auld and detestable monster of deadly feid.'

James VI. made it his business to bring peace to

the Borders by means of the sword. A Commission of five Englishmen and five Scots, with a troop of light horse, Sir William Cranston as their captain, were empowered to enforce the royal decree that murder, robbery, and family feud must come to an end; that the leopard (his spots all gone) must dwell with the lamb, and the lion eat straw like the ox. It was commanded that the 'irone yettis' of those peels possessed by members of broken clans should be beaten into ploughshares; that the members of these clans should be compelled to take to peaceful agricultural pursuits, and the carrying of arms was strictly prohibited. Mercilessly did Cranston enforce the royal orders. From 1605 until 1609, and even longer, the hanging and slaying of the moss-troopers went on with barely a check. Jethart Justice was the order of the day. There was never a case of 'Not Proven.' 'When in doubt, hang the prisoner,' was the motto of the Crown's representatives. Peel tower after peel tower was pulled down, and many a reiver had to skulk in bogs or amongst the hills, with 'lurgg dogges' on his tracks. Family feuds could flourish no longer in such circumstances. In April 1606 alone there were forty gallant Borderers hanged. In 1607 a number of lairds—Scotts, Rutherfurds, Kers, and Elliots—whose necks had escaped the halter, were driven from their own lands and sent to northern and inland towns. In 1608 many of the Maxwell family

met with a like fate. South of the Tay they were no longer allowed to make for themselves homes. In 1616 the king proposed that 'the most notorious and lewd persons' on the Border should be deported to the plantations in Virginia—and what might America not have been had he had his royal pleasure? But his councillors assured him that the step was unnecessary, the country was reduced to obedience 'and quietness,' and it would be well to let sleeping dogs lie. Two years later, however, a hundred and twenty 'broken men' from the Border were sent to fight in the Low Countries for James's son-in-law, the King of Bohemia, and levies of Borderers at other times sailed across the North Sea to come back to their heathery hills and their silvery rivers nevermore.

For the Graeme clan a crueller fate was chosen. They had always been a turbulent lot, ready to league with Scot or with Englishman when any reiving or fighting was afield, their hand against every man. Practically the whole of the clan were taken prisoners, their houses completely destroyed, so that their name might be wiped out from the land, and, while they were imprisoned in a pestilential gaol at Carlisle, a round score of them died. Those who were fit for foreign service were shipped off from Newcastle, ignorant of the fate of wives and children who were left homeless and starving in the wilds of Eskdale. Those who exiled them fondly imagined

that they were rid of them forever, but they did not count on the dauntless reiver blood that was ready to fight as long as life should last. By some means or another—to this day no one can quite tell how—some of the exiles managed to find their way back to Scotland, to seek in Eskdale the wives and families they had left in destitution. There the law found them out, harried them, meted out to them the punishment they had earned for daring to return. 'We are ready to go to the mouth of the cannon, to the block, or to the gibbet to show our loyalty,' they had already pleaded. Anything they were willing to do if they might know that those whose lives were to them most dear were provided for. But old offences, mostly imaginary, were raked up against them. Two of them were hanged for crimes they were said to have committed before they were twelve years of age. At long last a solution was found for the disposal of those Graemes who still remained on the Border to baffle the authorities. The clan had come to such a pass that anything different from their present destitution, their present condition of hunted insecurity, was welcome, and when the king decided that the Graemes should be transported to Ireland, there to stock County Roscommon, they submitted to his decree. Like many other emigrants who have crossed the seas to found new homes and fortunes, it was a woeful plight in which those Borderers found themselves

when they reached the country they were to help to populate. There was no food for them there, no shelter. Sir Ralph Sidley, the gentleman who had undertaken to see to their safe and comfortable settlement, pocketed the money provided for this by the Royal Commissioners and left them to shift for themselves. What little money they had of their own was soon spent. Homeless and friendless, they were left in an entirely uncultivated country of bogs and thickets, bracken and rushes, with only starvation before them. What wonder that, by hook and by crook, many of them managed to struggle home to their Border hills, there only to meet the punishment that was apportioned to those who had dared to brave the royal decrees for their welfare and prosperity. Some of them underwent retransportation, and helped to form the race of northern Irishmen. Others faced the gallows, and died within sight of the hills and the sound of the lilting burns of home.

Thus, step by step, were peace and order given to the Border clans. The deadly feuds were stamped out. The reivers' power was maimed, though their spirit was never destroyed. Many a gallant life was ruthlessly taken, many a woman's heart was broken, in order that the sapient monarch might lay a sure foundation for the paths of peace.

## CHAPTER X

### BORDER BATTLES

Beside yon brigg out ower yon burn,
Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.
*Prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer.*

FROM the days of the Roman occupation, the line of Border country between the Solway and the Tweed was the most used tourney ground in Britain. Many a battle fought there in the misty olden days has gone unrecorded, many a gallant skirmish has had no Froissart to hand on its story to future generations. But to Froissart himself do we owe the tale of as stirring a fight as ever was fought—a fight for which we might claim a place in the *Iliad* itself without disturbing the well-won sleep of the immortals.

In ballad form, too, we of Scotland and of England proudly own the magnificent tale. 'I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas,' wrote Sir Philip Sidney, 'that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet.'

In 1388 the condition of England was more a

subject of satisfaction to her enemies than to her friends. Family disputes interfered seriously with her government; France threatened an invasion. In the northern counties, two of the most powerful of the Border chiefs, Percy and Neville, were at daggers drawn.

These were ideal conditions for a Scottish raid on a large scale, and the Scots did not lose their chance. Early in August there assembled at Jedburgh a host numbering upwards of forty thousand men. James, Earl of Douglas, was in command, and with him rode such noted warriors as the Earl of Moray, the Earl of March, Sir James Lindsay, Sir Patrick Hepburn, Sir Alexander Ramsay, Sir John Swinton, and the king's second son, Robert, Earl of Fife and Menteith. 'In threescore year before there was not assembled together such a number of good men,' writes Froissart. And a gay meeting, according to him, it was. 'They were merry, and said they would never enter again into their own houses till they had been in England, and done such deeds there that it should be spoken of twenty years after.' How many a score of years has passed since then, and left their proud boast unshaken? At the church of Southdean, where the wooded beauties of the Jed valley meet the fresh hill breezes that blow across the Carter Fell and the heathery moorland, the leaders of the army held a council meeting. In spite of the most careful precautions,

news of the invasion had filtered through to England, and a squire who knew the Border country well was sent to Southdean as spy. In the church he learned news enough to set all the English side ablaze with apprehension, but he was not fated to be the bearer of the fiery cross. He had tethered his horse to a tree outside, and gone in along with many another young squire without exciting suspicion. But an ownerless horse was fair game for the Border lads, and when the spy, rich in fateful tidings, sought the steed that was to gallop with him over the hills and far away, he found himself the poorer by a good horse. His tongue was tied. He dared make no complaint. Booted and spurred, and with many a weary mile of rough road to tramp ere he reached the county of the Percys, he was hurrying off when a Scottish knight espied him. Here, indeed, was a wonder!—a rider whose horse had been 'lifted,' and who yet made no attempt to recover it. No Scot could this be—certainly no Border Scot. Two knights were speedily on his tracks, and in place of the spy handing on priceless information to his countrymen, he was compelled to tell all that he knew of the preparations and intentions of the English forces to a delighted audience of his country's enemies. Acting on the information thus received, the Scottish army divided. The main body marched to Carlisle, while the other, under the command of Douglas, crossed the Carter

Fell, passed down the lonely Rede valley, and went on to Durham, riding 'a great pace,' and never once stopping to plunder or to destroy as they went. Once within the bishopric of Durham, they let loose the dogs of war. They plundered and they slew, and the red flames and black smoke that marked their line of march heralded their approach more picturesquely than the tale of any scout could have done. As far as Newcastle the smoke rolled on, an added irritant—were one required—to the wrath of the sons of the Earl of Northumberland who there awaited the Scottish army. Ralph Percy and his brother Harry, known as 'Hotspur' to Shakespeare and to all posterity, were two notably fearless and gallant young warriors, and for the three days during which the Scots lay outside the town, the Percys were more than ready to take their share in the fighting. 'There were many proper feats of arms done and achieved: there was fighting hand to hand.' And James Douglas, then a man of thirty, who had come with the intention of humbling the pride of England, was not likely to be behindhand in the daily fight. To him and to Hotspur, a lad of twenty-two, came, on the last day of the siege, the joyous chance of measuring lances. Long the fight lasted, but Harry Percy was unhorsed at last, and, when he was rescued by his men, his lance and silken pennon were left in the hands of Douglas. More even than lance

and pennon he lost, for a pair of white satin gloves, gold fringed, and embroidered by a lady's hand in seed pearls with the white lion of the Percys, were part of the spoils of Douglas. After all, it may have been not for the sake of a pennon alone, fit cause for the shedding of blood though that might be, but for the love of the fair lady who gave to her knight a dainty *gage d'amour*, that many a man laid down his life on a moonlight night at Otterburn.

The Douglas shook the pennon aloft. 'Sir,' he cried, 'I shall bear this token of your prowess into Scotland, and shall set it high on my castle of Dalkeith, that it may be seen far off!'

'That shalt thou never!' cried Percy.

Then answered Douglas—'Come this night to my lodging, and seek for your pennon: I shall set it before my lodging, and see if ye will come to take it away!'

That night the Scots kept good watch, for they measured truly the weight of the insult; but dawn came without assault, and, with the dawn, they broke camp and turned their faces homewards. Passing by Ponteland, they took and burned the castle and village, and marched on, up the Rede valley, to Otterburn.

'They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down.'

Next morning they laid siege to the castle of Otterburn, but a weary day's hammering at its thick walls left them where they were. One day's march more would take them to their own side of the Border, but Douglas was too good a sportsman not to give his foe every possible chance. The other Scottish lords tried to persuade him to go on, but he would not listen to their arguments. They must stay there three or four days, he ordained, to 'repell the Percy's bragging,' and to give him an opportunity of winning back his gloves and pennon. 'For their honour and for the love of him,' there was not one that made demur. They threw up earthworks, made for themselves huts of boughs and 'great herbes,' drove their looted cattle into the marshy land, and placed their carts and baggage with the servants in charge at the entrance of a marsh near the Newcastle road.

It was late in the evening of that hot August day, and the Scots were resting at last, some of them supping, others already asleep, when Percy came to redeem his honour. When news had reached Newcastle that Douglas awaited him at Otterburn, Percy's eagerness overcame his discretion.

'To horse! to horse!' joyfully he cried, 'for by the faith that I owe to my God, and to my lord and father, I will go seek for my pennon and dislodge them this same night!'

Too eager to await reinforcements of ten thousand

men under the Bishop of Durham, he set off with an army of eight thousand foot-soldiers and six hundred horsemen and rode up to Otterburn when the shadows had fallen, and the pewits on the marshes had ceased their disturbed clamour and nestled down to rest. Percy's men were tired with their thirty miles' march; Douglas's must have been equally worn out by a long day's hard fighting in the blazing August sun. But there was no laggard in the Scottish ranks when a picket galloped into the camp with the tidings that the English, with a force double their own, were upon them, hidden only from sight by the birchen thickets. Percy's army fell first upon the servants in their quarters close on the Newcastle road, and the battle-cry of the Northumberland family, 'Espérance! Espérance! a Percy! a Percy!' made Douglas and his officers buckle on their fighting gear the more hastily. With armour only partly fastened, Douglas led his men, while Moray fought helmetless. 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' came the counter-cry, in time to rally the Scots, who were sorely outnumbered and in danger of being beaten back by their English adversaries. Douglas and Percy soon found each other in the throng, and around their banners did the fight ever wage most fiercely. 'Cowards there had no place,' says Froissart, 'but hardiness reigned with goodly feats of arms.'

In the face of a portent that then meant so much

to any warrior, the Douglas fought. The old ballad tells us of his dream—

> 'I have dreamed a dreary dream
> Beyond the Isle of Sky;
> I saw a dead man win a fight,
> And I think that man was I.'

When the moon came up, she shone on ground already slippery with blood and strewn with dead and dying men. Soon, as though unable to bear the hideous carnage of that fair summer night, she hid behind dark clouds, so that friends could no longer be discerned from foes. For a short time, until moonlight returned, the two armies had a breathing space, and when, once more, they fell on, the English had gained fresh vigour. The Scots could not but feel the weight of numbers that pressed upon them, but when they seemed to show signs of being driven back, Douglas seized his heavy battle-axe in both hands and hewed and cut a path through the throng, like a fierce autumn gale that forces its conquering way through a pine forest, leaving a score of smitten trees to mark its track. 'A hardy Hector,' Froissart calls him, and surely the *Iliad* holds no tale of valour by which that of Douglas can be surpassed. It was his last fight. Three terrible wounds in his body were draining his life's-blood, and his head had been crushed by a blow from an axe, when at last he staggered and fell to the ground.

So many had fallen there that the English did not recognise the Scottish leader, but Ralph Percy, who fought his way through the Scottish ranks almost single-handed, was less fortunate. Sorely wounded, and bleeding so terribly that he could fight no more, he fell into the hands of Sir John Maxwell. In the darkness Maxwell was unable to identify his captive, and demanded his name.

'I am Ralph Percy,' said the knight.

'Sir Ralph, rescue or no rescue, I take you for my prisoner: I am Maxwell,' said Sir John.

'I am content,' said Percy; 'but then take heed to me, for I am sore hurt; my hose and greaves are full of blood.'

'Maxwell, thou hast well won thy spurs,' said the Earl of Moray, when Maxwell handed over his prisoner that his wounds might be tended.

And still the fight went on, and Scots and English fought hand to hand, each to the death, and all for the sake of a silken pennon and a lady's glove.

Under the gentle light of the moon and stars, the din of battle all around him, James Douglas—he whom his chronicler remembered as the little fair lad at Dalkeith Castle—lay a-dying. By his side his faithful friend, Sir Robert Hart, fifteen wounds in his body, lay dead. Near him, too, was the corpse of his squire; while his chaplain, William Lundie of North Berwick, 'a tall man and a hardy,' 'not like a

priest, but a valiant man at arms,' who had followed like his shadow all through the fight, though sorely wounded, still swung his good axe with a will and kept the English at bay. His men had followed him as closely as they could, and many a one had fallen near him for the sake of chivalry and the love that they bore to the Douglas. Sir John Sinclair was one of the first of his friends to reach him, and anxiously asked his leader how he did.

'Right ill, cousin,' said the dying man; 'but, thanked be God, there hath been but few of mine ancestors that hath died in their beds. But, cousin, I require you to revenge me, for my heart grows faint and I know I am dying. Raise up my banner which lieth on the ground, and show my state neither to friend nor foe, for if mine enemies knew it they would rejoice and our friends be discomforted.'

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the bracken bush
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

O bury me by the bracken bush
Beneath the blooming brier,
Let never living mortal ken
That a kindly Scot lies here.'

Nobly did Sir John Sinclair and the Earl's other friends fulfil his behests. They covered him with a cloak; round the blood-stained banner they rallied, with revenge to strengthen sword-arms that already

had been those of heroes. The battle-cry of his own gallant name, in voices that heralded victory, must have been the last sound that smote the ear of Douglas, ere grey death wrapped her mantle round him, and his darkened eyes could no longer be lightened by the gleam of moon and stars.

One thousand and forty of the English were taken, or left dead in the field ere the waning moonlight brought the battle to an end. One thousand eight hundred and forty-nine were taken or slain in the pursuit, and above one thousand were wounded.

'The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But mony a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.'

When the English broke in retreat the Scots followed them, wounded lions, seeking their prey. Night and the small numbers of the pursuers favoured the routed army, and ere long the Scots had to return. According to Froissart, only one hundred of the Scots were slain, and two hundred made prisoners. The 'bent sae brown' at Otterburn was brown no longer when the sun rose next day on trampled bracken and broken silver birches, and on warriors whose fight was ended.

'Then one the morne they mayd them beeres
Of byrch and haysell graye;
Many a wydowe with wepying teyres
Ther makes they fette awaye.'

The Scots who met at Southdean had made good their boast, yet was it a pæan of victory, or a dirge that was in their hearts as once again they crossed the Carter Bar and saw the three blue Eildons looking down on Melrose Abbey? For thither they carried the body of the victor of a fight never to be forgotten by them, nor by any other who holds dear the records of the golden deeds of chivalry.

A century and a quarter had come and gone before the Border hills once more looked down upon a fight as fierce as the fight at Otterburn. But when the sun set on the 10th of September 1513 upon the field of Flodden, it set upon more dule and sorrow than ever the victory of Douglas over Percy had brought to the sister lands.

Of the courage of James IV. there had never been any question. But he who was ever gallant and fearless in the face of personal danger was a coward in morals, and a hopeless weakling where women were concerned. When Anne of Brittany, Queen of France, dubbed him her knight, and sent him, along with a gift of a turquoise ring, a prayer to step three feet and strike one blow on English ground, the weighty arguments of all the wise men in his kingdom were not likely to prevail against a request so moving to his gallantry. His brother-in-law, Henry VIII., in June 1513 invaded France. In that month, while King James was attending evensong at Linlithgow,

a mysterious figure in long blue coat and white girdle, with flowing golden hair, stooped over him and warned him to avoid war and to shun women. But James, perhaps believing that his ghostly monitor was inspired more by earthly than by heavenly things, gave no heed to the admonition. Later on, at midnight, at the Market Cross of Edinburgh, roysterers were made to tremble at the voice of a herald summoning, by name, the King and all his nobles to appear before Pluto within the space of forty days. Not even then did the King reconsider his determination. He gave 'thir Novels' 'but little credence,' and in July of that year he proclaimed war against England. Never, in Scotland, did a larger or a finer army meet than the one that assembled at the bidding of their King on the Borough Muir of Edinburgh in August 1513. A hundred thousand fighting men were there, the pick of the Highlands and Islands, the flower of the Lowlands. Scotts and Kers, Douglases and Homes came from the Border, nor was there a Border town that did not send the best of her men to help the King to fight and win a battle yet more glorious than Bannockburn. From Selkirk a band of one hundred marched out, their town-clerk at their head. Only two or three out of the hundred ever saw the braes of Yarrow again. With banners afloat, and bagpipes and drums proclaiming aloud the majesty of war, the King and his

splendid army marched out from Edinburgh, and on across the Border. The castles of Norham, Wark, Chillingham, and Etal fell before them, but when Ford was taken, after a five days' siege, the King fell under the fascinations of Lady Heron, chatelaine of the castle, and days that should have been spent in martial preparations were squandered in her company. On the ridge of Flodden, above a bend in the sluggish-flowing Till, the Scottish army was encamped, but, while the King happily spent his time in 'the primrose path of dalliance' with the treacherous wife of one of his enemies, the army's provisions began to give out. With them ebbed the warlike spirit of the troops. Man after man deserted. It is only a very genuine courage that can stand the test of long days of inactive waiting, in rainy weather, for the attack of an enemy that never comes. On August 30th the Earl of Surrey, with an army of twenty-six thousand, arrived at Durham, and there claimed from the prior the sacred banner of St. Cuthbert that brought for them the promise of victory. From Alnwick, on September 4th, Surrey sent James an insolent challenge by Rouge Croix herald, offering to fight the King on the following Friday, and accusing him of many deeds of violence and rapine. Honour forbade that the challenge should not be met, and, in spite of the defection of many of his men, it seemed as though victory for the Scottish King was a foregone

conclusion. The English army had been on short rations, drinking water instead of beer, and were worn out with long marches in rainy weather. Moreover, the Scottish army held an impregnable position, and all this Surrey recognised. He even went the length of sending another herald to demand that the armies should meet in fair field, and that his men should not be given the extra disadvantage of having to assault heights that might as well be the walls of a castle. King James was soldier enough to scorn this wonderfully impertinent demand. To grant Surrey's request would not have been chivalry but madness. Yet it was a kind of chivalrous madness that wrought the destruction of the ill-starred King. Surrey's army encamped in Wooler Haugh, but on the afternoon of September 6th he left Wooler and marched full seven miles eastward to Barmoor Wood, where his forces were almost entirely concealed from the watchers on Flodden Hill. On Friday, September 9th, this skilled tactician divided his army, sending his van and artillery across the Till by the old bridge that still stands at Twizel, and himself bringing the rearguard to cross at Millford, some distance farther up the river. If the English army was not to be starved out while the Scots held their magnificent position on Flodden Hill, now was the chance for the Scottish army to take them at a dire disadvantage, descend on them when their forces were divided, and,

at the ford, give the river the toll of men's lives that has ever been her boast. On his knees Borthwick, master of the artillery, begged the King to let him bring his guns to bear upon the column down at the ford—so easy and so rightful a prey.

'I shall hang thee, quarter thee, and draw thee this day,' said the King, 'if thou shoot one shot. I am determined that I will have them all before me on a plain field, and see then what they can do to me.'

Angus besought him to charge, and was met by such furious words of insult that the veteran wrathfully quitted the field, leaving behind him two sons and two hundred of his name to die for King and country. While James, for what he deemed his honour's sake and the fair fame of chivalry, gave his challenger every chance to equalise matters in the coming fight, Surrey quickly took those chances, and soon the King's unhappy councillors saw the English army, having safely crossed the river, advancing towards the hamlet of Branxton. Once encamped there, there was nothing left for the Scottish army but starvation. Even James could not suspect that Surrey would be capable of a mad magnanimity such as his own, and there therefore remained no alternative for the Scots but to go forward to the attack. In five divisions the line of battle was formed, the King himself commanding the centre. About four o'clock on that September afternoon, in dead silence,

and barefoot because of the slippery wetness of the short grass on the hill, the Scots began their descent, the smoke of the smouldering tents, which they fired ere they left, partially screening them from the enemy. In front of them, beyond the English host, they could see the woods of Roxburgh and of Berwickshire, the Eildons and the Black Hill, the distant Lammermuirs, even the heights of Ettrick and of Yarrow. And many a man there was who looked on them for the last time; many a man there must have been who knew that the mad courage of their gallant King was leading him to certain death in the rushy meadow at the foot of Flodden Hill.

Straight for the English standard, of course, made James; straight for Surrey, 'an old crooked carle lying in a chariot,' as Pitscottie describes him. 'Forward, banners!' was the order, and while the English guns thundered and mowed down the Scots as they advanced, and the archers slew the men the guns had spared, the Scottish guns, badly worked, remained silent, or thundered in vain. Soon guns gave place to spears and swords. Hand to hand they fought, and desperately did the spearmen of the Scottish centre hold their ground.

> 'The stubborn spearmen still made good
> Their dark, impenetrable wood.'

At first the advantage lay with the Scots, but it

was not with them for long. The English commander and his officers kept their heads. The Scottish leaders emulated the example of their King and fought as individuals, not as commanders. Many a deed of dauntless daring was done that day by men who fought a battle as though they fought in a tourney, who threw away their lives for the sake of loyalty to one who had squandered the lives of thousands of his people and the happiness of many more for a mistaken idea of chivalrous gallantry. To within a lance's thrust of Surrey, on ground sodden and slippery with blood, James had fought his way when he fell, riddled with arrows, his left hand dangling helpless, and his head well-nigh hewn off by an English billman. A dauntless bodyguard of the flower of his nobility had kept by him as he fought. When he lay dead, they kept their wardship still. Till darkness fell, and the battle ended, they fought for their dead King, one man taking the place of another as he fell beside his silent monarch. In vain the English soldiers tried to break through that barrier—

> '. . . A rampart rose before them,
> Which the boldest dared not scale;
> Every stone a Scottish body,
> Every step a corpse in mail.'

Next morning, when the English returned to the battlefield in search of plunder, they found the dead

King James still holding court, around him the bodies of twelve earls, fourteen lords, an archbishop, a bishop, and a pair of abbots; while the Flowers o' the Forest, and many another flower of chivalry, helped to keep their King's place for him even while they lay stark and dead.

To one man alone, and he a Scottish Borderer, is there any shame attached for his conduct that day. Many a Home was amongst the slain, yet it is said that Lord Home, chief of the clan, held aloof from the fight when his own people were in direst need, and took a body of his reivers to plunder instead of to fight. Pitscottie has it that to the remonstrance of the Earl of Huntly, Home answered, 'He does well that does for himself. We have foughten our vanguards and have won the same, therefore let the lave do their part as well as we.' It was a piece of treachery never to be forgotten, and even now the green and yellow liveries of his men are held in execration by the descendants of those who fell at Flodden. At Selkirk, still, they sing—

'Up wi' the souters o' Selkirk
An' doun wi' the Earl o' Home;
An' up wi' ilka braw callant
That sews the single-soled shoon!
An' up wi' the lads o' the Forest
That ne'er to the Southron wad yield!
But deil scoup o' Home an' his menzie[1]
That stude sae abiegh on the field.

[1] Men.

Fye on the green and the yellow,
The craw-hearted loons o' the Merse,
But here 's to the souters o' Selkirk!
The elshin, the lingle, an' birse.
Then up wi' the souters o' Selkirk!
For they are baith trusty an' leal;
An' up wi' the lads o' the Forest,
An' doun wi' the Merse to the Deil!'

Long after King James fell at Flodden, strange rumours held the popular ear. It was believed by many an honest Scot that his body had never been found, that he had escaped from the field, and on his own side of the Border, in the Merse, was in hiding. It took years to cure some of his people of the belief that their King was not dead, but was coming back one day, like King Arthur, to fight for and to claim his own. Hard it would have been for them to believe what seems to be the truth of the tale. For, according to Stowe the historian, his body was taken by the victors to London, thence to the monastery of Sheen in Surrey, where it rested in peace until Edward VI. came to the throne, and the monastery was dissolved. At Sheen, later on, Stowe says, 'I have been showed the same bodie, so lapped in lead, close to the head and bodie, throwne into a waste room, amongst the old timber, lead, and other rubbish.' From this he goes on to relate a grisly tale of how 'for their foolish pleasure' workmen hacked the head from off the royal corpse, and

'Lancelot Young, master glazier to Queen Elizabeth,' smelling 'a sweet savour' coming from the head which still retained its auburn hair and its other appearances of living humanity, took it with him to his house in Wood Street, London, and there kept it as a curiosity. But some glimmer of grace apparently came to Lancelot Young, for he gave it at last to the sexton of St. Michael's, Wood Street, to bury 'amongst other bones taken out of their church.'

So, in unfriendly soil, lie the ashes of King James the Fourth, while his sword and dagger remain as pleasant trophies for the English race in the College of Arms in London. One wonders how many a heart he broke, how many a home he rendered desolate. In Scotland, as in Rama, there was a voice heard of lamentation and weeping and great mourning—'Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not.' There was scarcely a family in Scotland, almost certainly no noble family, which had not cause to wear the dule weed for one who fell at Flodden.

'I've heard them liltin' at the ewe-milkin',
Lassies a-liltin' before the dawn of day;
But now they are moanin' on ilka green loanin',
The Flowers o' the Forest are a' wede away.

. . . . . .

Dule and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers o' the Forest, that foucht aye the foremost,
The prime o' our land, are cauld in the clay!'

The punishment meted out by Henry VIII. for the Scots who had declared war against him, was far from ending on the field of battle. A regular invasion of Scotland being impossible, Lord Dacre, Warden of the Marches, was commissioned to lay waste the Scottish Border, a commission which he fulfilled with the utmost conscientiousness. He writes that land for six hundred and thirty ploughs 'lies all and every one of them waste now, and no corn sown upon none of the said grounds.' The best of the fighting blood in Scotland had been spilt at Flodden, and there were few left to withstand the English forces that plundered and burned and razed at their King's command. Yet even after a year of flagellation the spirit of the Borderers who remained was not beaten out of them, as the story of the fight at Hornshole goes to prove.

Under Douglas of Drumlanrig the men of Hawick fought at Flodden, and barely a man of them returned. Yet when, one day, tidings of the advance of an army of authorised marauders from England reached the town, the news brought no panic with it. An army of old men and boys was all that could be mustered, but that army was mustered promptly and marched down Teviotside, where, by Hornshole, a deep pool in the river glen, they came upon the astonished English. The fathers and sons of those who fell at Flodden had revenge to give double force to their

Border zest for fighting, and the English were ignominiously routed. Those must have been proud mothers who welcomed back their boys that night, bearing with them in triumph an English pennon—the saltire *or* upon an azure field—which the 'Hawick Callants' still proudly bear each year at their Common Riding. And if women there were whose tears, not long dried, fell afresh over a son who lay dead, 'dead ere his prime,' in the silent woods by the river, yet they must have wept without bitterness, for there is nothing bitter in the tears that are shed by the mothers of heroes.

In the years that followed Flodden, there was no cause for abatement of the hatred of the Scots towards their English enemies. During the years 1544-45 Lord Evers and Sir Brian Latoun, with the royal commission, did all that lay in their power to cut the heart out of the Scottish Border. Her beautiful abbeys were destroyed, even the tombs were defaced; towns, castles, and peels were sacked and burned to the ground. Nothing that meant pride to the people of Merse and Teviotdale was left. The land looked as though it had been swept over by an all-devouring forest fire. The tower of Broomhouse, near Lauder, was burned by Evers, and along with it perished its lady and all her family.

Since the sack of Berwick by Edward I. there had been no more brutally merciless punitive expedition.

'They lighted on the banks of Tweed,
And blew their coals sae het,
And fired the Merse and Teviotdale,
All in an evening late.'

It was an ill day for Douglas, Earl of Angus, on which he learned that the guns of the English army had been blattering against the grey walls of Melrose Abbey, and that the tombs of his ancestors—even of him who fell at Otterburn—had been desecrated and defaced. Already on the head of Angus King Henry had put a price of two thousand crowns, and had promised to Evers and Latoun a feudal grant of all the lands in Merse and Teviotdale which they reduced to submission by means of fire and sword.

'If they come to take seisin in my lands,' swore Angus, 'I shall bear them witness to it, and perhaps write them an instrument with sharp pens and bloody ink!'

Joining forces with the Regent Arran, he marched towards Jedburgh in February 1545 in the wake of the English troops. Up the steep land between Melrose and Jedburgh went the forces of Evers and Latoun, and on Ancrum Moor, where fir woods now crown the hill, fearful to attempt the fording of the Teviot with a foe hot on their heels, they came to a halt. The English army consisted of some three thousand foreign mercenaries, one thousand five hundred English Borderers, and seven hundred assured Scots, amongst them—low be it

spoken—Ker of Cessford and Ker of Fernihirst, and many Armstrongs, Turnbulls, and members of other broken clans who fought with the badge of the red cross of St. George on their arms. The force of Angus was one thousand strong, and was reinforced by Norman Leslie, Master of Rothes, with a troop of three hundred Fifemen. While Angus and Leslie debated what had best be done, Scott of Buccleuch arrived from Branxholm with a sturdy little band of retainers. There was no uncertain sound in the advice given by the bold Buccleuch. Outnumbered or not outnumbered, they had to beat the English. That was a certainty. And in order to do this, he recommended that the horse should be sent to the rear, while the dismounted men, in ambush, awaited the result of this feint. It was in the gloaming of a February day, and when the English—the beams of the setting sun in their eyes, and a shrewd northerly wind blowing the smoke from their own camp-fires back in their faces—saw the Scottish horse cantering off, they fancied a retreat, and in disorderly haste charged downhill in pursuit. They realised their mistake when it was too late. The Scots, in a compact body, suddenly appeared from behind the woods and thickets on the slope of Peniel Heugh and fell upon them. As the word to charge was given, there arose in fear from the moss close by a heron and winged its way from the battlefield to a safer solitude.

'O that I had my white goss-hawk here!' cried Angus—'we should all yoke at once!'

From the first the English were at the mercy of the Scots. With sun and wind against them they were in a poor case. Each Southron rider seemed unable to do aught but ride, a helpless prey, on to the point of the Scottish spear that awaited him. When the Scots who had shamed their good Border names by fighting on the side of Scotland's foes saw how the day was going, they tore the red crosses from their arms and joined in the pursuit and subsequent plunder of the English troops. There was little quarter given that day. 'Remember Broomhouse!' was the Scottish battle-cry, and few there were who did not have cause to share their leader's desire that a lasting memorial in bloody ink should be written on the bodies of the English there. One thousand prisoners were taken, and twelve guns; and eight hundred were slain, many of them being men of rank.

Latoun and young Evers died on the field, but the story goes that Lord Evers, mortally wounded by Robert Haig,[1] was taken as prisoner by him to his house of Bemersyde. There, in a few days, he died, and was given gentle burial in the sanctuary that he had so vilely treated. He lies beside the Douglases in the chancel of Melrose Abbey.

[1] Haig is said, for this service, to have 'obtained a discharge of all the duties due by his family to the crown.'

Not only men, they say, fought for the Scots that day. Women, with much to avenge, slew as mercilessly as did the men of their race. A maiden from the neighbouring village of Maxton had followed the Scottish troops up to Ancrum Moor to watch how her soldier-lover sped. She saw him fall, and seizing a sword from one whose days for wielding it were ended, she rushed into the fight and slew several Englishmen before she herself was killed. In a wood, up on the ridge of Ancrum Moor, which still bears the name of Lilliard's Edge, the maiden's memory is immortalised, and the laws of physiology outraged, by an inscription on a stone which is said to mark her grave—

'Fair maiden Lilliard lies under this stane,
Little was her stature, but muckle is her fame;
Upon the English louns she laid mony thumps,
And when her legs were cuttit aff, she fought upon her stumps.'

The slaughter was so great that even the victorious Arran was moved to pity. He was looking at the prostrate body of Evers, they say, with Death's mark upon him, when he sighed—'God have mercy on him, for he was a fell cruel man, and over cruel. . . . And, welaway, that ever such slaughter and bloodshed should be among Christian men!' and thereat, it is said, the tears trickled down his cheeks.

'Highly discontent' was King Henry at the slaughter and bloodshed of that day. No tears had

he to spare for the fallen, and so the crusade against the Border went on. In 1544 his orders, through his Privy Council to his trusty lieutenant, the Earl of Hertford, were that no quarter should be given, 'putting man, woman, and child to fire and sword, without exception, when any resistance shall be made against you.' He now saw no reason for alteration in his orders, and the hatred between the two nations, which, for over two centuries, had steadily grown, now grew by leaps and bounds.

In 1545 the King sent Hertford across the Border with a huge host of English, Irish, Germans, French, Spanish, Italians, and Greeks. Grim and unrecountable were the atrocities perpetrated by this mongrel horde. Little wonder that the Scots became like wild beasts robbed of their young, and that when revenge was to be had they stopped short of no fierce cruelty in its fulfilment. In 1548 the Scottish army was reinforced by six thousand French soldiers, and to one of them we owe our account of the siege of Fernihirst. The Scots besiegers that day must have regretted that King Henry was dead and could not hear how they took their revenge. For three or four months Fernihirst Castle, whose grey ruins overlook the Jed, had been garrisoned by a bastard lot of troops under a commander whose lust and cruelty were closely imitated by the men under his command. Sir John Ker, its rightful owner, with a

strong support of French auxiliaries, stormed the outworks. The English garrison retreated to the keep, but the Scots undermined its thick walls. The commander then tried to treat with the besiegers. 'Slaves have no power to treat with their masters' was the reply that he received. Finally the wretched man surrendered unconditionally to a French officer, but a Borderer, whose wife he had ravished, was close at hand and struck his head from his shoulders with a blow that made it fly several yards away. With shouts of joy other Borderers rushed at the headless corpse and bathed their hands in its blood, and a purgatory and a hell of dread and of pain were the lot of the other men of that garrison.

'I myself,' says Monsieur Beaugé, the French officer to whom we owe this account of how the men of the Borders paid their dues, 'sold the Scots a prisoner for a small horse. They laid him on the ground, galloped over him with their lances in rest, wounding him as they passed. When slain, they cut his body in pieces, and bore the mangled gobbets in triumph on the points of their spears. I cannot greatly praise the Scots for this practice; but the truth is, the English tyrannised over the Borders in a most barbarous manner, and I think it was but fair to repay them, as the saying goes, in their own coin.'

'In their own coin,' indeed, it might be called, yet there was surely no brutality meet for the payment

of those who had spared no dishonour or torture either to woman or to little child.

Of all the many battles that were fought on Border soil, it is grievous for the Scot to have to own that at Otterburn and Ancrum Moor alone were the Scottish arms victorious. Yet of fights and of skirmishes one cannot say the same, and the last serious tulzie near the Cheviots was one in which the Border Scots distinctly held the honours. A mere brawl, military tacticians of this day may call it, but it was a brawl not without national importance. A Wardens' meeting had been fixed for the 7th July, 1575, and the appointed place of meeting was the Redeswire. The ling must have been beginning to purple then, the broom was still yellow, and there are few places on this earth more pleasant than that windy piece of moorland that has the Rede valley down below it to the south, to the north the valley of the Jed, with Tweeddale and the Eildons beyond, and, alongside of it, the Carter, with its bracken and heather and little mountain burns, and with the crow of grouse and of blackcock to tell of the sporting season to come. It was a holiday for men of both sides of the Border, and from either side came camp-followers of sorts who erected 'crames' with refreshments and goods of various kinds, much as are still to be found at the quickly vanishing Border fairs. At first Sir John Foster, the English Warden, and Sir John

Carmichael, Warden of the opposite March, were at one in all the questions to be settled. Then came up the case of a notorious English freebooter, for whose depredations a Scottish complainer demanded compensation. He had fled from justice, said Foster, and was not to be found. Carmichael, possibly not without reason, suspected Foster in this statement of compounding a felony, and told him to 'play fair.' Thereat Foster, without hesitation, retaliated by making some uncomplimentary reflections on the characters of Carmichael's own kith and kin. This was enough for his followers, the men of Redesdale and Tynedale. '*To it, Tynedale!*' they shouted, and let fly a flight of arrows among the Scots. At first things went badly with the Scottish Borderers, but when the Englishmen felt sure of victory, they thought that they might with impunity throw themselves upon the 'crames' of the traders, wreck them, and despoil them of their goods. They had reckoned without their host. It must have been a good horse that galloped down the hills to Jedburgh with news of the fight, for ere the English had won the day, from the brae towards the north there came a shout of 'Jethart's here!' and with a clatter of hoofs the Provost of Jedburgh and a sturdy troop of citizens were upon them. With a will did they lay about them, and the skirmish ended in a complete victory for the Scots. Sir John Heron was slain, and Sir John

Foster and many another English gentleman taken prisoner.

'With help of God the game gaed right,
Frae time the foremost o' them fell;
Then owre the knowe, without good-night,
They ran with many a shout and yell.'

Thus the exultant balladist, whose account is so detailed and so accurate that we cannot doubt but that he had his fair share of the fighting.

It would almost seem as though those who died in fair fight on the Border must require a Valhalla for themselves, so many there are who have fought to the death amongst these Border hills.

Nearly a hundred years after the Raid of the Redeswire had infuriated Queen Elizabeth, there marched through the Border with his troops the solemn-faced Lord Protector, come to quell the loyalty shown by the Scots towards the House of Stuart. At Fala Moss, not far from the source of the Tweed, one of Cromwell's outposts, sixteen horses in all, was surprised and taken by Porteous of Hawkshaw and a company of moss-troopers. One by one the reivers slew their captives, and there, by the lonely moss, they buried the doughty psalm-singers from the English shires. Neidpath Castle was taken by the Protector; so also was Home Castle. They stabled their horses in the church of Peebles. 'The greatest releiff at this tyme,' says John Nicoll, a

historian, 'wes by sum gentillmen callit moss-trouperis, quha, haiffing quyetlie convenit in threttis and fourteis, did cut off numberis of the Englishes, and seased on thair pockettis and horssis.'

The Protector was dead when General Monk, in wintry weather, in the year 1659, marched through the Scottish Lowlands on his way to England to restore a monarchy. While at Coldstream he recruited, and the men whom he drew to his colours then were the ancestors of the regiment that is still known as the Coldstream Guards. At Oudenarde, at Waterloo, at Inkerman, at Tel-el-kebir, and in a round dozen of other fierce battles our Coldstream Guards have fought. At Blenheim and Waterloo and Balaclava, and at many another place, the Scots Greys have upheld the honour of their race. The King's Own Scottish Borderers have graves in Egypt and Afghanistan and South Africa, and the Border Regiment has well earned the laurel wreath that is a part of its badge. As defenders of the honour of Britain, Border Scots have not done ill.

Our enmity is forgotten now; only by a small and intellectually provincial section is hatred to the English race still fostered. English and Scots now fight together, die together, for the honour of their country. Together they are buried in lands far across the sea. The gods be thanked that the Motherland of Britain is now meant, and not England or

Scotland alone, when we read on the memorial tablet to some brave lad whose death in a distant country is chronicled in the little church of the place which his people have ruled for generations, '*Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*'

## CHAPTER XI

### THE COVENANTERS

. . . Clear uprose the plaintive moorland psalm,
Heard high above the plover's wailing cry,
From simple hearts in whom the spirit strong
Of hills was consecrate by heavenly grace,
And firmly nerv'd to meet, whene'er it came,
In His own time, the call to martyrdom.

SHAIRP.

THE race of the reivers may not have been noted for its natural piety, yet even after it had become a bad thing for place and for pocket for a man to be a reputed Papist, the Borderers clung to the Roman Catholic religion. Once, however, that they had exchanged priests for presbyters, they were found equally staunch. Natural obstinacy and a deep-rooted objection to giving up any possession without first having a fight for it, may, perhaps, with some of them, have had as much to do with the matter as had a love for the Presbyterian form of worship. The Borderer would give, and give generously, on his own initiative, but he held on to that which he owned, and would defy any power on earth that tried by force of arms to wrest it from him. Even now, it is as hard to

steal a horse from a Borderer of the old breed as it is to shake his inherited political convictions, and his traditionary beliefs in what his family and ancestors have held to be the most perfect forms of Church government and of religious creed. Thus it was a matter of course that many a Borderer suffered for the sake of the Covenant, although, when compared with the vast number of those from Clydesdale and from Galloway, the percentage of Border men who went to 'glorify God at the Grassmarket' is but small.

James the Sixth boasted that he 'knew the stomach' of his Scottish people. His treatment of the Border clans makes one doubtful if he knew as much as he thought he did. In all things pertaining to moral courage, he was Darnley's true son. His Presbyterianism was opportunism. He, as well as his grandson, was of opinion that 'Presbytery was no religion for a gentleman,' and at heart he was always Episcopalian. But he had neither the honesty and the loyalty of his mother nor of his son with regard to his form of religion. So John Knox preached the sermon at his coronation, and had to thole the sight of his monarch being anointed in the Episcopal manner.

When Charles I. came to Edinburgh in 1633, John Knox, mercifully for his peace of mind, had been sixty years in his grave. Thus was the Reformer

spared the heart-breaking sight of the King being anointed by bishops who wore what he had been wont to call 'Papist rags,' and who had altar, crucifix, candles, and all complete. At St. Giles', next morning, two English chaplains took the service, and thereafter, at the adjoining house, the royal party held a banquet. No pious Sabbath entertainment this. The din from 'men, musical instruments, trumpets, playing, singing, also shooting of cannon,' was such 'that no service was had in the afternoon either in the greater or lesser kirk of St. Giles.' It was not long after his return to England that Charles I. frankly showed his Scottish subjects his hand in regard to the form of worship that he desired should be theirs. Archbishop Laud stood sponsor for the Liturgy which Charles gifted to his Scottish subjects. 'A Popish-English-Scottish-Mass-Service-Book' was what those subjects held it to be, and when Jenny Geddes hurled her 'creepie stool' at the head of the surpliced Dean who introduced the Prayer Book to an aggrieved congregation in St. Giles', she was held to be adequately representing the men and women of her nation.

'Dost thou say Mass at my lug?' questioned the outraged Jenny. That was the key to it all. It was, in the minds of the people, 'the Mass.' John Knox had not lived in vain. A religious vendetta dies hard, and to the Scottish Presbyterian of the seventeenth century, as it is still to many a Protestant,

the Roman Church was the Scarlet Woman, the Whore of Babylon. Episcopacy meant only the thin end of the wedge, yet an end sufficiently thick to touch the pockets as well as the religious tenets of the nation. At any cost 'the Mass' must be kept out of Scotland, which had so lately been purged from idolatry by the great iconoclast, and whose children were suckled in the creed of John Calvin, nurtured in the tender doctrine of predestination.

On March 1, 1638, in the churchyard of Greyfriars in Edinburgh, the National Covenant, a magnificently comprehensive charter, was signed by those who were ready to fight and to die for the sake of Presbyterianism. Noblemen and gentlemen, men of every rank and station, wrote their names on the document that lay spread out on the flat, grey tombstone; and, first of all, in the bold, clear hand that is so characteristic of the man, came the signature '*Montrose.*' Many signed with their blood, and many and many a man bore witness with his blood to the faith that he clung to ere the contest, that was that day formally begun, came to an end. Things had gone too far for peaceful settlement. If the Scots would not say their prayers in the desired way, they must be soundly trounced into the proper posture. A royal army of twenty-one thousand came north to administer a beating to the rebels, and, meantime, the Covenanters seized the castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, Douglas,

and Dalkeith. The Earl Marischal, Montrose, went off to deal with the non-Covenanters of the north, while General Leslie, 'an old little crooked soldier,' who had fought in the Thirty Years' War, and gained the friendship of Gustavus Adolphus himself, went to the Border. With Leslie in command, there was little likelihood of there being any lack of military discipline in his troops.

On June 5, 1639, the army of the Covenant was within sight of the army of King Charles—the King's army lying by the Tweed, at the Birks, three miles from Berwick, while the Covenanters encamped on Duns Law, the broomy hill that slopes gently up behind the little Border town. To Robert Baillie, Principal of the University of Glasgow, preacher to the Ayrshire contingent, we owe our most vivid account of the encampment at Duns. He gloried in the perfect preparedness of the Covenanting army. 'It would have done yow good to have casten your eyes athort our brave and rich Hill, as oft I did, with great contentment and joy.' Their colonels, he says, were mostly noblemen — Argyll, Rothes, Cassilis, Yester, Dalhousie, Eglinton, Lindsay, and many another; their captains 'for the most part barrons or gentlemen of good note'; their lieutenants 'almost all sojours who had served over sea in good charges.' 'Our sojours were all lustie and full of courage; the most of them stout young plewmen; great cheerfull-

ness in the face of all.' In front of their captain's tent door each company flew 'a brave new colour,' bearing the Scottish Arms, and, in letters of gold, the legend, 'For Christ's Crown and Covenant.' The sounds of prayer, of the singing of psalms, and of reading of the Scriptures, came from the tents in the morning and at even, although the truthful chronicler has regretfully to own that 'in some quarters' there also existed some 'swearing, cursing, and brawling,' which grieved his righteous heart. Presumably those veterans who had served with Gustavus had still something to learn in the matter of godly conversation. The old song of 'Leslie's March' tells us almost as well as does Mr. Baillie what was the sanguine spirit of the Covenanting troops. 'Cock up your bonnets,' says Leslie to his men—

'The kist-fou o' whistles
That maks sic a cleerie,
Our pipers braw
Shall hae them a'—
Laud and his crew shall gang tapsalteerie.

. . . . . .

When to the kirk we come,
We 'll purge it ilka room,
Frae popish relics, and a' innovation,
That a' the world may see,
There 's nane in the right but we!'

From his camp in the Tweed valley, King Charles probably saw enough of the soldiers of the Covenant on Duns Hill to realise that defiance meant defeat.

He compromised, and the Pacification of Berwick (June 18, 1639) was the result. This treaty was a singularly barren one. For one year only, the peace lasted. The heather on the Lowland hills was purple when the Covenanters marched into England, crossing the Tweed at Coldstream. Dice were cast by those in command as to who should cross first, and the lot fell on Montrose. In full view of the enemy, he gave the army a lead through the river, wading on foot, 'boots and all,' to ascertain the depth of the water, and returning again when he had crossed, so as to give them confidence. The river took them up to the middle, and was running so strong that a regiment of cavalry had to be stationed so as to break the force of the current. One man was drowned, but their leader's cheerful mien did much to spur them on. They marched to Newcastle, which they occupied without difficulty, and for the next eleven months they were masters of Northumberland and Durham. At the end of that time it was no longer a case between Presbyterianism and Episcopacy, but a war between Roundheads and Cavaliers, and the Covenanters, as was only natural, allied themselves with the enemies of royalty. Then it was that some of the men who had defended and were ready to fight for the Covenant showed that, with them, the old belief in the divine right of kings came before the rights of any Church.

'God and my King' was the motto for such men,

and foremost amongst them, as he had been foremost amongst the men of the Covenant, was the Marquis of Montrose.

During those dark years, when Scottish history is crowded by

> 'A noble army, men and boys,
> The matron and the maid,'

who suffered or died for what they held dearer than life itself, the figures of two cavaliers stand out from amongst the saintly multitude of those who coveted martyrdom, and to the lineal spiritual descendants of the men of the Covenant they still bear the brand of bloody persecutors.

These cavaliers are the two kinsmen, Claverhouse and Montrose; and in certain minds they must for ever wear the garb of bloodthirsty profligates, of vicious and cruel enemies to the Church of Christ, neither will their haters be persuaded, 'though one rose from the dead.' Yet, perhaps, some of the saintly ministers of the Covenant gained their martyrs' crowns more easily, and left behind them a less perfect record of purity of soul and complete self-sacrifice, than did James Graham, Marquis of Montrose.

Till Montrose died he was a Presbyterian, but he was not one of those who believed that there was but one road to Heaven, and that the straight and very narrow path of their own unassailable dogma. 'Serve God. Honour the King,' said St. Peter, and so long

as he served his God with a faithful heart, the form of his service mattered but little to Montrose. But to honour the King there was but one way. He could

> 'Be governed by no other sway
> Than purest Monarchy.'

When affairs in England had gone badly for Charles I., this gallantest and truest of his cavaliers marched to the north, with a small body of horse and foot, to do battle for his King. As far as Dumfries he got safely, and then was forced to retreat hastily to Carlisle. Three months later, he again made his way across the Border, this time disguised as a groom, and with only two companions—Colonel Sibbald and Captain Rollo. Twice, on their venturesome way, they were stopped; once, in Cumberland, by one of Sir Richard Graham's scouts, who satisfied himself that they were soldiers of the Covenant, and let them go, and, later on, by a Scottish soldier. But the Scot had seen service where Montrose, the gay gallant, was a hero to his men, and there was no disguising from him the 'quick and piercing grey eye,' and the 'singular grace in riding' of the groom who was no groom. 'What! do I not know my Lord Marquis of Montrose well enough?' he said, when Montrose would have tried to keep up the little comedy. 'Go your way, and God be with you wherever you go.'

'A few crowns' were given to the man by Montrose —always noted for his open-handedness—but one is fain to believe that it was love, not money, that kept the old soldier faithful. Near Perth, in the house of his kinsman, Graham of Inchbrakie, Montrose found sanctuary, and was not long in raising an army. Highlanders and wild Irish composed it. They had no money, no cannon, not more than a single round of ammunition, and the arms of the Irish were rusty, battered matchlocks, pikes, clubs, bows and arrows. One-third of the army, indeed, had no better weapons than the stones they picked up as they fought. But it was an army that grew day by day, and its power was quickly fed by an unbroken series of brilliant successes. It seemed as though the poet-soldier were going to win all Scotland for his King, and even England feared what might come to pass once he and his men, with their bunches of ripe grain in their caps, had crossed the Border. In the days when he fought on the side of the Covenant it was he who instituted the fashion that each man of his host should wear a blue ribbon, worn scarfways, or a bunch of blue ribbons decking his bonnet, and presently even the leaders did away with hats and wore the bonnet with its streamers of blue—'the Covenanter's ribbon,' Montrose dubbed it. 'This was Montrose's whimsie,' mocked a parson of his day, who probably better realised the value of Montrose's

love for emblems when 'all the blue bonnets were over the Border.' If Montrose had his 'whimsies,' none can say that his fancies were those of the effeminate poet. He was soldier and statesman, as well as artist, and the army he commanded was one to strike terror to the hearts of the vanquished. The tales of the misdeeds of his troops, as chronicled by his Covenanting enemies, make but sorry reading. When Aberdeen was sacked by them, even his own friends have to tell a piteous tale. 'The unarmed citizens were butchered like sheep in the streets. The better sort were stripped before death that their clothes might not be soiled with their blood; women and children were slaughtered for bewailing their dead, and those women were happiest who expiated their tears with life.'

It was not only at the hands of Montrose's Irish that the north suffered. Argyll's Highlanders had already burned 'the bonnie house o' Airlie,' and many and many an atrocity had been committed in the country of the uncovenanted in the name of the Lord. But for the atrocities of Montrose's Irish there is no apology to offer. That he held them within bounds as well as mortal man was able to do, is all that one can say. And if we read the tale of what our own British troops did in the Peninsula in later days,—if we have heard of what European armies did in China in our own times, how can we

afford to throw a stone at the general who only controlled his undisciplined troops in the hour of victory as far as in his power lay?

From his triumphs in the north Montrose marched south, in the hope that a victorious King was to meet him somewhere near the Border, Leslie's army defeated, and with the Scottish nobles rallying round the royal standard. But the motto of King Charles was not that of Montrose—

> 'He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch,
> To gain or lose it all.'

The King had not dared to do battle with Leslie even when victory seemed well within his grasp, and when Montrose went to meet the foe that his King had feared to engage, it was with an army that had sadly fallen away. The Highlanders had mostly gone home 'to look to their own affairs.' Three thousand of them left his standard because he would not allow them to plunder Glasgow. The Gordons had taken offence and deserted him, taking almost all the cavalry with them. But he still owned a gallant little bodyguard of Ogilvys, and the Border earls, Home, Roxburghe, and Traquair, had cordially invited him to come to the Border and join them in fighting for King and Crown. Montrose, whose word was ever his bond, was not likely to doubt the faith of men

who had pledged themselves to the royal cause, so south he marched, down Gala Water and Tweedside, as far as Kelso. There he learned that Home and Roxburghe had kept up their family tradition that discretion was ever the better part of valour. They had surrendered to Leslie and his troops and been taken, as prisoners, to Berwick. Traquair, more of a trimmer than either of them, sent a troop of horse, under his son, Lord Linton, to support the royal standard. When Leslie, having heard from Roxburghe and from Home, if not from Traquair himself, of the poverty of the land, was marching towards Selkirk, the Traquair rats quickly left the ship. Montrose soon realised how heavy were the odds, yet when Leslie, with his well-disciplined army of between five thousand and six thousand troopers marched down Gala Water and camped at Melrose, there was no sign of dismay on the part of the general whose fighting men consisted of wild Irish and a few degenerate and ill-equipped sons of the men who held the Border in bygone days. In September 1645, Montrose's ragged army, scarcely one thousand in all, having at Kelso, and afterwards at Jedburgh, learned that the Borderers were Covenanters first, Royalists afterwards, took up their quarters on the level ground immediately between the junction of the Tweed and the Ettrick, at what is the Selkirk cricket-ground of to-day. The cavalry were quartered in Selkirk;

where also, in a house close to the West Port, Montrose himself stayed. The trees of Harehead Wood, that lies to the west of Philiphaugh, were wearing autumn colours; in the fields the stooks were still standing, ready for Montrose's men to tear up to make bunches of yellow grain to stick in their caps, according to their leader's latest 'whimsie.' Ettrick and Yarrow and Tweed made gentle music down their valleys, and the sleepy little town of Selkirk seems to have had a somnolent effect upon the whole of that ill-starred army.

On the evening of September 12th, Montrose for once relaxed his discipline and gave the duty of placing outposts into the hands of others. Singularly inefficient those outposts were. During the night rumours reached Montrose of the approach of the enemy, but his scouts rode in, drenched with the thick grey haar, from various directions, and 'wished damnation to themselves if an enemy were within ten miles.' And, meantime, from Melrose, Leslie was making the advance—an advance that was helped by the mist that blotted out the Eildons, clung to the sighing rivers, and hung round Black Andrew and the Three Brethren, a chilling, impenetrable veil of sad colour. The clatter of hoofs at midnight, telling that Linton and his men were hieing them home to Traquair, was deadened by the density of the atmosphere. The sound of the approaching army also, apparently, fell upon muffled ears.

The ringing sound of Leslie's trumpet within the camp was the first intimation that the Royalists had that black disaster was upon them. Montrose was breakfasting in Selkirk when the sound of firing brought him the untoward news. In a couple of minutes he was off, on the first horse that came handy, clattering down the brae to the river at a breakneck gallop, splashing through the water under the fire of the enemy. Some of his cavaliers came close on his heels; the rest of the cavalry followed in disorderly haste. For a short time a gallant stand was made, and twice the Covenanters were beaten back. But there were six thousand cavalry against six hundred infantry and a few score of horse, and soon Leslie's tactics came to the rescue, and two thousand of his troopers were sent to attack the Royalists in the rear. From the high bank above the ford the Selkirk folk watched, as if from the gallery of a playhouse, the terrible play that was being enacted in that haugh by the river. High on the river-bank a Highland piper marched up and down, playing his best for the troops who had so many times in the north fought their way to victory to the sound of his pipes; but, ere long, a Covenanter's bullet stopped his music for ever. Like a shot rabbit he rolled over and over, down the brae, dropping like lead into the pool that goes by the name of 'The Piper's Pool' to this day. 'The Piper of Soney' is supposed to have been his

territorial designation, and, at the first skirl of the pipes, Montrose is said to have called to him that if he would play all day, he should be paid well when the victory was won. Hence the old saying, when one's labours are fruitless—

> 'He is like the Piper o' Soney,
> That played a' the day and gat nae money.'

How could the children of Selkirk ever forget the sights that they saw that day? The story of the death of the piper, and of a certain white pony that had escaped from the battlefield to be commandeered by him—a youthful raider of five—was handed on with vivid detail to his children by an ancestor of one who now tells the tale.

Down there in the haugh some hundreds of the Irish fought like heroes, but they had no chance. They were between two fires, decimated by Leslie's guns on the high ground above them, while, from the other side of the field, the cavalry rode them down, and cut them in pieces. Who can wonder that those who survived after nearly an hour of this, threw down their arms when they were told that their lives would be spared if they did so? Montrose was ready to fight to the death, and round him fought a little band of cavaliers, to whose names be ever glory given—the Marquis of Douglas, Lord Napier, then a man of seventy, and the Master of Napier; young Drummond of Balloch, Napier's nephew; the Lords Erskine and

Fleming, Sir John Dalziel, and some others. There were about thirty horsemen in all, but those kept a whole army at bay. They, at last, persuaded Montrose that his was too valuable a life to his cause to be thus thrown away, and urged him to fly. Then, in a Homeric charge, Montrose at their head, they carved their way through Leslie's cavalry and galloped up the Yarrow valley towards Minchmoor, a party of dragoons in hot pursuit. A skirmish followed, in which Montrose held the honours, and a captain and two cornets who were taken prisoners were released by him on giving the promise that three Royalist prisoners of rank equal to their own should be released upon their rejoining the victorious army.

In the Border the Covenanting spirit was abroad and Royalism was nearly dead. Montrose and his Irish represented to the peasants of Selkirk and Peebles and Roxburgh the spiritual oppressors of their land. Woe, then, to those who sought to escape from that bloody field by the braes of Yarrow and the moors of Peeblesshire, or to find hiding-places in the woods by the Tweed. They were captured by the country-folk and handed over to that good Protestant, David Leslie, that they might be given their deserts. Already those Irish who, on the field, were promised quarter, had been given what was held to be their due. Unarmed, defenceless, surrounded by a strong guard, they were marched to a field near

PHILIPHAUGH

at hand, and there shot down—by order of the commandant. Nor were women and children spared that day by the ruthless soldiers of the Covenant. They were all under the same condemnation in the eyes of those whose battle-cry at Tippermuir had been '*Jesus and No Quarter.*' 'Thine eye shalt not pity and thou shalt not spare' was the text of one of the sermons preached thereafter by one of the men who believed himself to be a faithful servant of Christ. Women and little 'cook boys' were slain in the camp. Close to Newark Castle, at the spot known as 'Slain Men's Lea,' many prisoners were butchered. In the Tolbooth of Selkirk those who survived the day of battle were kept until all consciences could be satisfied by a farcical trial, when they were promptly put to death in the Market Place. Amongst them were six Irishwomen, whose only crime apparently was that they had been taken on the field of battle. The two Irish officers who had commanded the infantry which made so fair a stand were taken to Edinburgh and hanged, without trial, on the Castle Hill. Of those others of the Royalist leaders who fell into their enemies' hands, Sir William Rollo, Sir Philip Nisbet, and Ogilvy of Innerquharity were beheaded without delay.

'Eh! but the wark goes bonnily on!' exclaimed the saintly David Dickson, Moderator of the General Assembly, upon hearing this joyful news.

The others were imprisoned while Parliament discussed the case. It was not quite so easy to dispose of the leaders as of the rank and file. 'The House ordains,' says an Act of the Scottish Parliament of that time, 'Irish prisoners taken at and after Philiphaugh, in all the prisons of the kingdom, especially in the prisons of Selkirk, Jedburgh, Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Perth, shall be executed without any assize or process, conform to the treaty between the two kingdoms passed in act.' While Parliament pondered, 'humble remonstrances' came in from the Commission of the General Assembly and from various Synods, begging that these sons of Belial should be put to death. The Synod of Merse and Teviotdale besought the Parliament to do what 'the Lord calls for at your hands,' and to 'cut off the horns of the wicked.' And the horns—and heads—of 'the wicked' were cut off with little more ado.

Of the battle of Philiphaugh we find records in the session papers of many parishes. From Tyninghame comes the following: '13th September 1645.—James Grahame's army utterlie defaitt at Phillip Hauche, prased be God.'

'The battle of Philiphaugh!' writes Mark Napier. 'It was no more a battle than it was a wedding. . . . In recording the bloody day of Philiphaugh, we may speak of a surprise, a rout, a capture, a massacre, but never of a battle.'

And shameful it is for us Scots to have to own that the massacre was one that was not confined to the field of battle.

Up the dowie dens of Yarrow rode Montrose and his little following, over Minchmoor, until, sixteen miles from Philiphaugh, he reached the old grey house of Traquair, which only a few hours before he had looked on as the home of a friend. But when he inquired for Traquair and his son, he was told that they were 'not at home.' 'Notwithstanding,' writes a chronicler, 'there are gentlemen of credit that testify that they were both within.' In years to come, Traquair was to have more than one experience of finding doors closed in his face, for he ended his days as a street beggar.

Local legends of that dreary ride still hold their own in Yarrow. Montrose is reported to have thrown his treasure-chest into the dark pool in Yarrow known as the Mystor (treasure) Pool, near Harehead Wood, telling the Devil to keep it for him until he returned. Many a lad has sought it there, but one rusty Lochaber axe is all that has rewarded the seekers. Another legend says that as Montrose rode up the valley he cast the chest in at the door of a cottage at Foulshiels and galloped on. The owners of the cottage, an old man and woman, were still disputing as to what they should do with the unexpected fortune, when some of

Leslie's troopers arrived and relieved them of all responsibility.

From Traquair the fugitives went westward, crossing the Tweed at Howford, and reaching Biggar in the evening. At dawn next morning they forded the Clyde. Never again did Montrose hear the music of the Border rivers, and it was a woeful weird that he had to dree ere his warfare was accomplished. The sale of his King to the English by the men of the Covenant—

> 'L'Ecosse, parjure à sa foi,
> Pour un denier vendait son Roi!'—

the execution of Charles,—these were black trials for one who loved his King to the death, and to whom the honour of his land was ever dear.

> 'I'll sing thine obsequies with trumpet sounds,
> And write thine epitaph in blood and wounds.'

To Charles II. he transferred his devotion. 'Your Sacred Majesty's most humble, faithful, and most passionate subject,' he signed himself in 1649. It was later on in that year that the King's faithful subject was taken as a felon through the streets of Edinburgh, in a cart driven by the hangman, his hands bound, so that if the mob, as was hoped, should stone him, he would not be able to protect his face. From no indignity that it was possible to inflict upon him was he spared. In prison he was baited by the

Covenanted preachers, who felt that by so doing they were obeying their Divine Master's behests. One of his gaolers, the afterwards notorious Major Weir, knowing that he hated the smell of tobacco, did what he could to make his cell disagreeable to him by persistently smoking there in spite of remonstrance.

That day in May when Montrose, head erect, courage, loyalty, serenity all as perfect as the honour he had never stained, walked to the scaffold, was a shameful day for those who did him to death. He looked 'like a bridegroom,' wrote one who saw him in his gallant array—a 'fyne scarlet coat to his knee, trimmed with silver galoons, lined with taffeta,' roses in his shoon, and 'stockings of incarnet silk' that are at Thirlestane now, in possession of the Napiers. Even the hangman was moved to tears. To him, his Charon, Montrose—to the end a confirmed giver of largesse—gave four gold pieces.

'I never saw a more sweeter carriage in a man in all my life . . . he is just now a turning from the ladder,' says the chronicler, 'but his countenance changes not.'

To the waiting crowds he said: 'It is spoken of me that I should blame the King. God forbid. For the late King, he lived a saint and died a martyr. . . . For his Majesty, now living, never any people, I believe, might be more happy in a King. His commands were most just, and I obeyed them. . . . I leave my soul

to God, my service to my Prince, my good-will to my friends, my love and charity to you all.' 'The ministers, even on the scaffold, were very bitter against him.'

> 'He would not deign them word nor sign,
> But alone he bent the knee;
> And veiled his face for Christ's dear grace
> Beneath the gallows tree.
> . . . . .
> Then radiant and serene he rose,
> And cast his cloak away:
> For he had ta'en his latest look
> Of earth and sun and day.'

So did the curtain fall on a gallant cavalier, who never bent the knee save to God and to his own crowned King.

Montrose's body was hacked into many parts. His head was stuck up to blacken on the Tolbooth; his quarters were sent to adorn the ports of Glasgow, Stirling, Perth, and Aberdeen; the maimed trunk was thrust into a shallow grave in the felon's graveyard on the Boroughmuir. Two nights only did it lie there, and then a gallant little band of adventurers, inspired by his kinswoman, the Lady Napier, dared to disinter it, and brought to her care the heart, than which none nobler, truer, or more loyal ever beat.

Long years after the battle of Philiphaugh, there was found on the field a little heart-shaped locket. On one side is carved a long, straight, heavy sword,

and below it a winged heart. On the other side is a heart pierced through with darts, with the motto 'I live and dye for loyaltye.' It contains a beautiful, minute *alto relievo* likeness of Montrose, facing which are the words 'I mourne for Monarchie.' The little trinket would seem to contain an epitome of the history of one of the noblest of the cavaliers.

The ugly tale of Montrose's murder is one that blackens the roll whereon are inscribed the names of many a saintly martyr of the Covenant.

But if there were bloodthirsty fanatics in the ranks of the Covenanters, there was also a noble army of saints who perished for what they deemed to be the sake of Him who bore the Cross.

The Restoration of Charles II. was followed by 'The Killing Time,' when the Grassmarket was a shambles where, for many a year, there flowed an almost constant stream of the blood of the innocent. The south of Scotland became a school for martyrs. In Galloway, in 1666, the smouldering wrath of the Scottish peasantry burst into the flames of insurrection. Some soldiers were ill-using an old man, accused of nonconformity, when four 'honest men' who had come from their hiding-places among the mosses of Galloway to seek food at the lonely little clachan of Dalry, came to the rescue and shot a soldier. There was plenty of combustible material for such a spark to kindle. The skirmish at Rullion Green followed,

then Drumclog, and finally Bothwell Bridge. They who dared in those fights to raise arms against their anointed King paid for their temerity to the uttermost farthing. They who had the boldness to repudiate the services of the Episcopal curates or the indulged clergy fared equally badly. Those were years when religious fervour rose to wonderful heights. Men and women, noblemen and peasants, went to the scaffold with a kind of ecstasy of devotion. One has to go to the records of the Reign of Terror in France if one wants to look at men and women who met what was meant to be shameful death with the same magnificent courage and fine dignity as the Scottish Covenanters. Naturally it was a time when superstition claimed her own. Men dreamed dreams and saw visions. The 'Prophet Peden' (whose 'Pulpit' may yet be seen on the summit of Ruberslaw), a gaunt figure, whose prophecies of evil were as sure as a rifle-bullet, was feared even by the ungodly. The Plague in England in 1665 was regarded as an ominous threat from Heaven against the persecutors. It broke out at the same spot in London where a 'globe of fire' had been previously seen to suspend itself, and at that self-same spot it was that the Solemn League and Covenant had been burned by the public hangman. In Scotland 'a great blazing star representing the shape of a crab' was seen, 'prodigious sign of great troubles in Scotland.' On lonely moors

ready-made graves were found, some in groups of fours or fives. A long-continued snowstorm, lasting from December till the middle of March, was another ominous sign. Each comet had its special message. Drops of blood were found where no blood should be, and were accepted as portent of coming disaster. On the 25th of May 1650, on Buccleuch's property on the English side, 'for the space of three miles,' it 'rained blood.' The months of snowstorm were, indeed, evil months for those whose hiding-places were in caves and holes in moor and glen. The 'thirteen drifty days' of 1660 meant such disaster to the hunted ones that for that alone they might well be remembered in the Border. But to the practical agricultural mind of the Borderer of to-day, the 'Drifty Days' do not suggest Covenanters, but Cheviot sheep! So many sheep then perished, it is affirmed, that stock-raisers were thankful to breed from any sheep that came to hand. Hence the origin of the famous Cheviots.

There was, however, no hardship that the Covenanters dared not and did not face. Rothes, His Majesty's Commissioner, wrote of them despairingly—'The Barbadoes does not in the least terrify them, dam'd ffuls.'

There were twenty-eight Teviotdale men in the ship *Crown*, loaded with slaves for the plantations, that was wrecked off the Orkneys on its way from

Leith. The prisoners were kept under the hatches until the vessel broke up, and two hundred out of two hundred and fifty-seven perished like rats in a trap. Of the men from Teviotdale only six escaped.

Those who attended conventicles took their lives in their hands, yet the risks they ran led to no diminution in the numbers who came to be ministered to by their hunted pastors on lonely moors or desolate fastnesses of the hills. Many a time have the fervid prayers of the preachers been interrupted by the sight of the red coats and cantering horses of dragoons who came to slay without trial or to drag off to torture or banishment the gallant little flocks of those whose dogged loyalty to their beliefs kept them faithful unto death. Little wonder is it that that psalm whose mournful wail still has the power to recall the hardships of the hunted hill-folk who met by stealth to praise God in the way they deemed the best, should bear the significant title of 'Martyrdom.' It is not long since the Lowland herds were wont to stamp on the nests and clutches of pewits' eggs when they found them on the moors, as a traditionary revenge on the birds whose excited wheeling and mournful cries many times betrayed to the dragoons the hiding-places of the Covenanters.

There was no lack of spies upon the conventicle holders. At Yarrow, John Bremner, of evil memory, the Episcopal curate in charge, was wont to furnish

the Government with news of conventicles about to be held by his parishioners. A certain 'strange, gaunt woman' acted as his familiar and provided him with the means for betrayal. At his door lay guilt for many a death in Yarrow, when a Covenanting bullet sent through his parlour window put an end to his treacherous career. There were delicate distinctions drawn by the godly of those days between bloody murder and righteous execution. Mass John Bremner and Archbishop Sharpe were enemies of the Covenant, and to neither could quarter be given.

'As for this Cardinal, I grant,
He was the Man we well might want,
God will forgive it soon:
But of a Truth, the Sooth to say,
Altho' the Loun be well away,
The Fact was foully done.'

A religious warfare is ever the most bitter of all wars, and the tales of the misdeeds of King's men and of Covenanters, as chronicled by rabid contemporary partisans, makes but sorry reading. Hard indeed it is to sift the tales to the bottom, yet on both sides there is quite sufficient unassailable evidence of fierce revenge and of bloody cruelties. Were we to take the Covenanting view alone, there was barely a man who held sacred office in the Church approved by Monarchy who was not a lewd fellow of the baser sort.

'Mr. George Wiseheart,' writes Wodrow, was in

1661 given the see of Edinburgh. 'He had been laid under Church Censure by the old Covenanters, about the time of the encampment at Duns Law, and this probably recommended him now. This man could not refrain from profane Swearing, even upon the street of Edinburgh, and he was a known Drunkard. He published somewhat in Divinity; but then, as I find it remarked by a very good Hand, his lascivious Poems, which compared with the most luscious Parts of Ovid, *de Arte Amandi*, are modest, gave Scandal to all the world.'

At Ancrum, the picturesque little village near Jedburgh, the people had been privileged to 'sit under' the godly John Livingstone, until his nonconformity drove him into exile. His successor, appointed by the ruling powers, was a certain Mr. James Scott, once excommunicated for misdemeanour, and still remaining under that sentence. According to the opponents of Episcopacy, his future flock had abundant moral grounds for objecting to have him as their spiritual guide. On the day he came to preach his first sermon in Ancrum parish, the bolder of his parishioners greeted him with words that were far from being a welcome. One woman, Turnbull by name, plucked at his cloak and begged him to listen to the reasonableness of their objections. Too much was this for Mr. Scott, who promptly smote his forward parishioner with the cane he carried. This was the

signal for some boys to throw stones (it may have been almost unfortunate that their aim was bad) at the new curate, and a pretty story indeed it was that he had to tell to the High Commission Court. The sheriff and justices laid hold on the malcontents, fined and imprisoned them. This was, however, too lenient a punishment for the boys who had thrown stones. At the Cross of Edinburgh four of them were branded on the forehead with a hot iron; they were then scourged through the streets, and thereafter shipped to the Barbadoes. The woman who had been the unhappy cause of the disturbance was whipped through Jedburgh, while her two brothers were banished to Virginia.

Such was the Jethart Justice of Covenanting times.

Probably a good deal of the Covenanting zeal to be found amongst various of the reiver families was due to the ministrations of the godly Richard Cameron. While still a youth he was tutor and chaplain in the family of Sir Walter Scott of Harden, who attended the ministrations of one of the indulged Presbyterians. To Cameron this savoured too much of bowing down in the House of Rimmon. Apparently he remonstrated, and his office at once became vacant. Thereafter he was licensed as a preacher by Mr. John Welsh and Mr. Gabriel Sempill, two eminent men of the Covenant, in the house of Henry Hall of Haughhead, a famous Border Covenanter, in the Northumbrian

village of Haselridge where he and many another hunted man had found sanctuary. Being licensed, the youth was commissioned to go to preach in Annandale.

'He said, how could he go there? He knew not what sort of people they were. But Mr. Welch said, Go your way, Ritchie, and set the fire of hell to their tails.' Nor did 'Ritchie' shrink from this amiable task. The first day he preached to the Annandale men his text was—'*How shall I put thee among the children?*' In the application he said 'Put you among the children! the offspring of robbers and thieves! Many have heard of the Annandale thieves.'

Probably the men of the Marches liked strength and fearlessness in spiritual exhortation as in all other things, for we are told that 'some of them got a merciful cast that day.' When Richard Cameron met his martyr's death on the bleak moor of Ayrsmoss, the man who cut off his hands and head took them to show to the Privy Council ere they were fixed upon the Netherbow. 'There 's the head and the hands that lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting,' said he, as he threw down the fair head of him whom his elders always knew as 'Ritchie,' and who was then little over thirty years of age.

On the Harden family Richard Cameron's influence was scarcely for the advantage of their pockets. In 1662 the Lady of Harden would not comply with the State's religious regulations, and a fine of £18,000

Scots was inflicted upon her husband. Cameron died for his convictions in 1680, and three years later we find Sir Walter Scott himself, then a man of nearly seventy, imprisoned in the Tolbooth for refusing to pay a fine. The fine at that time demanded was £46,125 Scots, and the old chief complained that not only was he unable to pay this sum, but that imprisonment was affecting his health, and begged for some remission. The reply he received was that he was removed from the Tolbooth to Edinburgh Castle that his health might benefit by a change of air, while his fine was reduced to £1500 sterling. His freedom, when at length he obtained it, apparently was of short duration, for in May 1684 we again find him in prison, this time in the Tolbooth of Jedburgh, for refusing to pay a fine of £2944, 8s. 10d., while his son was sentenced to pay £3500 for his conscience' sake. Once again Harden petitioned for some remission, with the result that he was promptly made to exchange his county gaol for the Edinburgh Tolbooth. It is interesting to note that the half of his fine went into the pocket of 'Bluidy' Mackenzie.

Being only a passive resister, Harden, after all, fared better at the hands of the Government than did some of his neighbours, whose defiance took a more active form. Mr. Henry Erskine, son of Ralph Erskine of Shielfield, was minister of Cornhill, but was ejected from his living by the Act of Uniformity.

He came to live with his brother at Dryburgh, and continued to preach the Gospel in the forbidden way, sometimes in the house, sometimes in the fields or woods by the Tweed. One Sunday in April 1682 he was seized while at family worship and haled off to Melrose. From gaol in Melrose to gaol in Jedburgh, from Jedburgh to Edinburgh, he was taken—a gentle, musical, benevolent, Christian gentleman, who played with much taste on the cithern, or great lute, in days before his hands were mauled with thumbscrews. Finally he was condemned to the Bass, but his state of health was so precarious that his friends petitioned to be allowed to pay a heavy fine that he might go free. After many a vicissitude the Rev. Henry Erskine reached calm water at last, and the closing years of his life were full of happiness and peace. He died as minister of Chirnside, and the beloved of his people, at the age of seventy-two.

Lady Douglas of Cavers was also among the sufferers. She and her husband refused to give up the keys of Cavers Church when the newly appointed curate came to demand them, and apparently they took no steps to check their people when they stoned their new pastor in the graveyard. Douglas of Cavers was outlawed, and, on his death, his widow steadily refused to allow her children to be brought up as Episcopalians. Her eldest son was forcibly taken from her and placed under tutors appointed

by the Privy Council, and, in later days, was able to save his mother from some of the hardships she would otherwise have had to undergo for the sake of her principles. As it was, 'the gude leddie of Cavers,' which still remains her title, went through hardships enough. She was known to befriend and to shelter ministers who were 'wanted,' and to be a zealous attender of conventicles, and was fined £500 sterling, a sum exceeding three years' rent of the Cavers estate. Peden's Pulpit and Hagburn, one on the summit and the other on the eastern slope of Ruberslaw, Peden's Vale, Denholm Dean, and the Little Dean, were all within easy reach of Cavers, and all of them were well-known meeting-places. Consequently it was advisable to place the good lady out of the reach of temptation, and for two years she was imprisoned in Stirling Castle, only being allowed out for a few weeks at the request of her eldest son (who had been educated in such a way as to win him the royal favour) 'to go to some wells for her health.' Having done her cure, she returned to prison in Stirling and there remained, until sentence of banishment brought her prison life to a close.

Lilliesleaf Moor was the most used conventicle ground in the Border counties, and various happenings there led more than one good man and true into the way of martyrdom. After Drumclog, the Covenanters of Merse and Teviotdale resolved to march to the help

of their brethren in the West. Lilliesleaf Moor, not too far from the Merse, handy for Teviotdale, nearly equally handy for Tweeddale and Ettrick and Yarrow, was the spot they chose as rendezvous, and on June 6, 1679, three hundred armed men met there. Two Border lairds, Turnbull of Sharplaw and Riddell of Newhouse, neither of them of the Covenanted, were met riding between Lilliesleaf and Holydean that morning by a detachment of Covenanters from the Lothians. There was too great a chance of their having come from spying on the Covenanting force, and they were turned and brought to the moor as prisoners of war. Those Lothian men were evidently old campaigners, for as they passed Lindean they commandeered two horses for the army's use, and when it was safe for Turnbull and Riddell to be allowed to go home, they took their horses from them, and sent them off on foot. To the prisoners, whose evidence afterwards was used against their captors, we owe a description of the little army. It was too good a chance, of course, not to have a preaching, and while the Rev. David Williamson preached to the larger part of the force, an armed guard patrolled the ground. When service was over, the troops, who carried a drum and a pair of colours, exercised on the moor, while their commanding officer, Turnbull of Standhill, held a council of war with his staff—Turnbull of Bewlie, Alexander Hume of Hume, and

other doughty representatives of reiving families. Most of the officers wore long grey riding-cloaks, innocent enough garments, indeed, but as they walked the ends of swords glinted in the sun. The council of war ended, each officer rode off with his own little following of horse and foot to carry the fiery cross round the Border in as many directions as possible. The Lothian men went to Melrose, Turnbull of Bewlie's troop to Kelso. Next morning the entire force assembled again at Hawick, and from then until Sunday night they besieged Hawick Castle. The colours and arms of the disbanded local militia were stored there, and made it a valuable prize for the badly armed troops. With only one man of them wounded — Mr. John Purden, schoolmaster — the defenders capitulated on Sunday evening, and handed over to the besiegers what they sought. While the siege of Hawick went on, those of the army whose services were not required held a second conventicle at Lilliesleaf Moor, and from Lilliesleaf, on Monday, Mr. Alexander Hume of Hume took his way homewards. He was mounted on a bright bay horse, and wore a black velvet riding-cap and dark cloak, lined and faced with royal red — a gallant figure, this kinsman of the Earl. One servant only accompanied him, but a troop followed at some distance behind, along the wooded banks of Tweed to the house of Makerstoun. In a park on the Makerstoun estate

the troops called a halt, lit fires to cook their supper, shod their horses, and otherwise employed themselves, while Hume rode up to the house to interview the proprietor, Sir Henry MacDougall. But news of the siege of Hawick had reached Makerstoun, and the gates were barricaded. Nevertheless, Hume tried his persuasive eloquence on the laird, and besought him 'to surrender to the good cause and join it while there was time.' While he spoke, a messenger posted up with the news that Hawick Castle was taken, but it was news that had no effect upon Sir Henry, who told Hume that anyhow there was no fear of the Covenanters being able to take Makerstoun. Obviously he had no wish to join the 'good cause,' so Hume gave up his attempts at persuasion and descended to a mere question of horse-couping. He evidently had a fancy for bay horses; perhaps he wished his second charger to be a good match for his first. At all events, he asked Sir Henry to sell him a bay horse that he knew was owned by the young laird of Makerstoun. But Sir Henry was a stout King's man and had no dealings with rebels. He would not even sell a horse to Hume, and told him so. Thereupon Hume, seeing that there was nothing to be gained for his cause by remaining, collected his men and rode away.

Turnbull of Bewlie, who with his troop had ridden to Eccles, was less pacific in his methods. The minister of Eccles was a noted enemy of the Covenan-

ters, and therefore fair prey, and he was the poorer by two horses and four saddles when those godly reivers left the manse. Less than a year earlier, Turnbull's brother, along with 'Thomas Wauch, merchant in Hawick,' and Margaret Barclay, also of that town, had been convicted of being present at house and field conventicles and banished to the plantations, so that Walter Turnbull of Bewlie must have felt bitter against informers, ministerial or otherwise. It was, however, on Hume that the arm of the law descended in heavy chastisement. That unfortunate call of his at Makerstoun was a sufficiently large serpent's egg to be hatched by the Lord Advocate ('Bluidy Mackenzie'), well prompted by others who fancied Hume's was a neck that was safer with a rope tight around it. For long they vainly hunted him, for he had cunning hiding-places—the secret room at the Tower of Greenknow in Berwickshire, where lived his connections, the Pringles, at Bassendean, and at Falside, both near Gordon. When they found him at last he made a stout resistance and was severely wounded ere he was taken. This is his indictment—'That in June 1679 he rose in rebellion; he came to the house of Sir Henry M'Doual of Mackerstoun, besieged it and called for Horse and Arms; and being bolted out, came armed to Kelso, Selkirk, and Hawick, and searched and sought for horses and armour, and carried away Militia Colours, drums, etc., and

wounded Mr. John Purden, schoolmaster at Hawick, and did resist His Majesty's Forces at Bewly Bridge, under the command of the Master of Ross, and marched forward to Bothwell Bridge.' None of these charges were proven. It was proved, indeed, that Hume carried out the siege of Makerstoun with the aid of one man-servant only, and that no violence was ever suggested. There was, however, no escape for Mr. Alexander Hume, who was much too deeply involved in the military proceedings of the malignants to be allowed to be at large.

In 1682—the same year that 'Bluidy Mackenzie' was conferring a benefit on all posterity by founding the Advocate's Library—this Whig, whom the Lord Advocate had successfully harried to the gibbet, paid the penalty of being loyal to his cause. On the afternoon of the 29th of December, at the Market Cross of Edinburgh, Alexander Hume sang the last verse of the seventeenth Psalm with the rope round his neck, and then met his shameful death like a man. Mr. Wodrow, most intemperate of partisans, has it that Hume's wife went to the Countess of Perth and begged her to intercede for her husband with the Earl of Perth, for the sake of five small Humes who were not yet fit to do battle with the world. The reply of the Countess Mr. Wodrow declares to be unpublishable. He also declares that influential friends in London got Hume's sentence remitted, and

that the remission actually reached Edinburgh some days before his execution, but was kept back by the Earl of Perth. Such a dashing Covenanter as Alexander Hume, cousin of an Earl, who pursued his missions on the Border on a bright bay horse, and wore a cloak lined and faced with royal red, was certainly a danger to the community.

'Fight for the bishops, says a priest, with his gown and rochet.—Stand stout for the Kirk, cries a minister, in a Geneva cap and band.—Good watchwords all—excellent watchwords. Whilk cause is the best I cannot say.' So spoke Captain Dugald Dalgetty; and to such soldiers of fortune as he, ever ready to sell their swords to the highest bidder, a cavalier like Hume—no 'snivelling Whig psalm-singer' he—must have proved a dangerously attractive recruiting sergeant in the eyes of the Covenanters' enemies.

While Hume and the Turnbulls were recruiting on the Border, Melrose was their headquarters. The grey walls of the Abbey echoed to the sounds of bugle and of drum; troops of horse daily clattered past the old town cross. On the 10th of June, their commandant, Turnbull of Standhill, apparently decided that it was time to make a move for the west. No unskilled general was he, and he timed his march from Melrose just as two troops of the royal horse under a 'Captain Bukame' were sent out to deal with the rebels. At Bewlie Bog these troops encoun-

tered—they may probably have thought accidentally —a small party of Covenanters, decoy ducks sent from Melrose by Standhill. There was a hot fight, and it went hard with Standhill's men. Many were seriously wounded, some were killed on the spot; others were driven back into the moss, where reeds and rushes and cottongrass covered a treacherous quagmire whose black mud quickly engulfed them; some were carried off the field to die. Yet the survivors carried out the devised strategy, and it was only after Bukame and his troopers had wasted hours in hunting the fugitives across the rough country round the slope of the Eildons and up the side of the Tweed to Galashiels, that they realised that the heroic little band of Covenanting Borderers had used the ruse of the pewits on the moors to lure disturbers away from their nests and young, and that while they were foundering their horses in vain pursuit, the main body of the Covenanting troops had safely eluded them.

To the hunted it was not possible that the hunters should appear to be anything but sinful and bloody men. Six thousand Highlanders had been brought down from the north to help to quell the rebellion, and the caterans were not slow to help themselves to the rebel's possessions every time the chance offered itself. Bloodshed was to them a trifling matter when they were not dealing with questions

of clan feuds, and they and the other redcoats hunted the Whigs with a will.

'Troth when they fand them, they didna use muckle mair ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roebuck.—It was just, "Will ye tak the test?"—if not, "Make ready—present—fire!"—and there lay the recusant.'

It is not so many years since an old woman up Yarrow was having a 'lesson' from the Book of Revelation read to her by her little granddaughter.

'And there appeared another wonder in Heaven,' read the child, 'and behold a great red dragoon' . . .

'Hoots, lassie! it 's no' a dragoon,' said the grandmother.

The child persisted.

'Gie 's the Book, an' rax me by my specs,' said the old lady. 'D-R-A, dra, G-O-N, goon. Ye 're richt an' ah 'm wrang. Read on.'

'And the great dragoon was cast out,' proceeded the child.

Triumphantly spoke the grandmother: 'I kent *that* wad be the upshot o 't! It 's the wunner tae me hoo he ever wan in!'

Chief of all those 'red dragoons' whose rightful home was the nether regions, was the 'Bloody Claverse' himself. As one looks at the fair face of that most loyal and fearless of cavaliers, it is hard to believe in the tales of his merciless cruelty. But Claverhouse was a true servant of the King, and so that

the King were perfectly served, it mattered but little to him how many dead bodies had to form a causeway for the safe passage of the royal chariot wheels. To the superstitious minds of the Scottish peasants he was no less than Lucifer incarnate, while the black charger that he usually rode was one of the Devil's own. Near the head of Moffat Water, upon the Bran Law — a precipice where neither earthly horse nor mortal rider could achieve such a feat, Claverhouse and his black horse are said to have coursed and turned a hare. Not far from the same spot, at the *Stey Gail* (or Steep Gable), a precipice in the Lowthers, a similar tale is told of another of the fiends of the Persecution, Grierson of Lagg, who 'once rode at full gallop along its slope after a fox.' 'No *canny* man or horse,' says Dr. John Brown, 'could do this and live.'

The Enterkin, an eerie glen in the same district, is the scene of a blood-stirring adventure in the Killing Times.

A party of twenty-eight soldiers were marching, two and two, up the narrow path, the abyss with its 'dismal bottom' on the right. With them they had some sixteen prisoners, one of them a minister, on their way to 'glorify God at the Grassmarket,' as his Grace of Lauderdale aptly put it. Suddenly, out of the mist on the hilltop, high above them, came a man's voice, calling loudly. The procession halted.

'*What d' ye want, and who are ye?*' called the commanding officer.

Thereat came out of the mist and stood on the hillside, twelve men.

'*What are ye?*' again called the officer. '*Stand!*'

To which came the reply of the leader of the men above, '*Make ready!*'

To the dragoon officer on the narrow path below he then called, '*Sir, will ye deliver our minister?*'

With an oath the dragoon shouted back, '*No, sir, an ye were to be damned!*'

A shot from the Covenanting leader ended the parley. It was aimed truly. The officer fell from his horse, shot through the head. The horse reared, swayed, and crashed down the precipice, rolling over and over, and arriving a crushed and mangled mass of dead flesh in the glen far below. The twelve men on the hill had prepared to fire a volley when the officer next in command called for a parley. That mangled mass of bones and blood beneath them sickened the soldiers. 'Not a man of them durst stir a foot or offer to fire a shot.' It was the last drop in their cup of dread, when two scouts returned to tell them that at the top of the hill in front there awaited them yet another body of armed men. The dragoon officer called to the foe above enquiring what they would have.

'Deliver our minister,' was the reply.

'Well, sir,' said the dragoon, 'ye 'se get your minister, an ye will forbear firing.'

'Indeed we 'll forbear,' called the leader of the enemy. 'We desire to hurt none of ye; but, sir, belike ye have more prisoners?'

'Indeed have we,' said the officer.

'An' ye maun deliver them all,' said the Covenanter.

'Well, ye shall have them, then,' said the dragoon. 'Bring forward the minister.'

So the minister's bonds were cut, and he climbed up the rocky hillside and joined his deliverers.

'You owe your life to this damned mountain,' said the officer as he set him free.

'Rather, sir,' said the minister, 'to that God that made this mountain.'

When the minister had safely reached his friends, the leader called to the dragoons to deliver the other prisoners, and they, too, were allowed to climb the hillside. The officer, feeling then that his part of the bargain had been handsomely fulfilled, called to the Covenanters to withdraw the men posted at the head of the pass.

'They belong not to us,' was the reply. 'They are unarmed people waiting till you pass by.'

'Say you so?' said the officer. 'Had I known that, you had not gotten your men so cheap, or come off so free!'

'Are ye for battle, sir?' asked the gallant soldier

of the Covenant. 'We are ready for you still. If you think you are able for us, ye may try your hands. We quit the truce if you like.'

'*No*,' said the officer—and Defoe, who tells the tale, puts the refusal in italics—'I think ye be brave fellows. E'en gang your gait.'

There were many heroes and heroines in those days—men who wore the boot and the thumbscrew, and who suffered the utmost tortures that human flesh could bear ere they wore the halter in the Grassmarket or by the Town Cross of Edinburgh; women whose fingers were charred to the bone by lighted matches tied between them, and who yet did not allow the weakness of the flesh to overcome their own dauntless loyalty to those they loved, and to the faith to which all their hopes of future happiness were pinned. There were heroes and heroines, too, whose years were so few that one is ready to hate those 'red dragoons' who inflicted on them pains and terrors before which even the soldiers who bestrode the 'wooden horse' in those hardening times might have flinched and played the renegade.

On the Border there is a child who still remains a heroine to old and young—Grisell Hume of Polwarth. She was the daughter of Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, held to be an enemy of the Government. Early in her girlhood Grisell Hume became used to the absence of a father whose return to his own estate

in Berwickshire meant death. She was twelve years of age when her father used her as the bearer of a message from him to his friend, Baillie of Jerviswoode, then a prisoner in Edinburgh Tolbooth, and there it was that she first met Jerviswoode's eldest son, George Baillie, whose happy wife she became thirteen years later. Then came a time when Hume of Polwarth was in hiding in his own domains. In a vault beneath Polwarth Church Sir Patrick Hume lay hidden. A black walnut folding-bed, exactly underneath the pulpit from which the minister of Polwarth preached every Sunday, was his at night. By day he passed his time in reading Buchanan's Latin version of the Psalms and in watching the sun's rays that thrust themselves through the bars that protected the gloomy sepulchre of his ancestors. For a month he lay here, his hiding-place known only to his wife, his daughter Grisell, and to Jamie Winter, a carpenter on the estate. There is a walk now, through an open glen, by the Swindon Burn, called the Lady's Walk. Lime-trees grow on either side of it, and at the end lies Polwarth Church. By this path Grisell used to go at dead of night to visit her father. She was an imaginative, poetic little maid, and to her a churchyard was a place of dread. But, night after night, in mirk darkness, she would take that walk, when the sound of the burn on the stones, the rustle of the wind in the limes, whispered only of loneliness; would

stumble over the graves in the old kirkyard, and yet would reach her father's hiding-place with courage unabated. The soldiers who were searching for her father were her one real terror. The love she bore to him was strong enough to lay all the ghosts in Christentie, but the rabbit or fox that scuttled through the bracken, the bark of a dog, the swish of the wind through long grass or leaves, would bring a picture of murderous redcoats to her mind, and she would come to an agonised stop, her heart a-thump with apprehension. She would stay in the vault to watch her father eat the food she had brought, and to tell him all the incidents of the day, until it was so near cock-crow that she had to run up the glen homeward. It was not easy for her mother and her, without the servants' knowledge, to provide food enough to keep their prisoner alive. One day the dish at dinner was what Grisell knew to be her father's favourite—sheep's head. Her brothers and sisters were busily supping broth when she succeeded in conveying the whole head from the dish to her lap. Her brother Sandy, afterwards Lord Marchmont, was finished first, and, looking up from his empty plate, saw that the sheep's head had 'santed,' as they say on the Border.

'Mother!' he shouted, 'will ye look at our Grisell! While we have been supping our broth, she has eaten the hale sheep's heid!'

During the day, as well as by night, Grisell Hume was working for her father. When the security of his hiding-place in the vault became doubtful, Jamie Winter was called on to make a large deal box, to be stored in a cellar in Hume's castle of Redbraes, now known as Marchmont. Before room could be found for the case, much of the earth on the floor of the cellar had to be cleared away, and as the sound of pick and spade would have aroused suspicion, Grisell Hume and the faithful Winter did it with their own hands. Not a nail was left on her poor little fingers when she had burrowed a space sufficiently deep and wide, yet she finished her task, and one dark night her father exchanged one prison for another, and took up his quarters inside the deal box.

He was still in hiding at Redbraes when a party of dragoons were sent out from Edinburgh to take him. On their way they passed Halyburton, where John Hume, the laird, a staunch friend of Hume of Polwarth, met them on the road.

'Where do you ride to-day?' he asked.

To take Polwarth, at Redbraes, they said.

'Is it so?' said Hume. 'Then I'll go with you myself and be your guide. But come your ways into the house and rest you a little, till I get ready for the road.'

Once he had them safely inside his house, his great case-bottles in front of them, Hume left his guests

for a few minutes, and sent off a messenger on a swift horse that he kept constantly saddled for this exact emergency. While the soldiers were still deep in the appreciation of the hospitality of the laird of Halyburton, his messenger had reached Redbraes. His message was a brief one. The envelope sent by him was opened, and a feather fluttered out. Ere the soldiers arrived at Redbraes that night, under the kindly guidance of their late host, the bird had flown, and Patrick Hume of Polwarth was safely across the Border. When he ultimately found sanctuary at Utrecht, Lady Hume, with Grisell and all her other children, was able to join him. When the Prince of Orange was King of England, and the exiles had returned, Patrick Hume, that 'thin clever man,' was made Chancellor of Scotland and Earl of Marchmont. And when, in later days, Grisell Hume was Lady Grisell Baillie of Jerviswoode, her name was famed not only as that of a poetess, but as a daughter whose courage, devotion, and fortitude were sublime even in the dark days and long nights of the Killing Time. She it was who wrote the song

'Werena my heart licht, I wad dee.'

And it was that light heart, that delightful humour which, in our own times, characterised her descendant and namesake, that helped a child to come with noble distinction through times that might have daunted

the hearts of heroes. On her gravestone at Mellerstain one may read the somewhat pompous catalogue of her many virtues. As wife and mother she was no less perfect than she had been as a daughter. 'Christian Piety, Love of her Country, Zeal for her Friends, Compassion for her Enemies, Chearfulness of Spirit, Pleasantness of Conversation, Dignity of Mind, Good Breeding, Good Humour, Good Sense, were the daily Ornaments of an Usefull Life,' says her eulogiser, Judge Burnet, who is responsible for the epitaph of the lady who, 'full of years and good works,' was buried on the day upon which she should have celebrated her eighty-second birthday—Christmas Day, 1746. But it is not as an old lady that Grisell Hume lives in the hearts of this generation, but as a little fragile girl, whose perfect love cast out all fear.

A less peaceful ending to troublous days than that of Patrick Hume was that of his friend, Robert Baillie of Jerviswoode. In England and in Scotland there were plots and plans made by those men of education who were neither fanatics nor intriguing politicians, but who simply had an honest desire to work for their country's good. Hume of Polwarth was one of these, Murray of Philiphaugh and Baillie of Jerviswoode were others. One honest man refused to join in the peaceful scheme for emigrating themselves and their families to South Carolina, in which many Border lairds were secretly involved, because of the

ominous names of two of the schemers—'Hanging-shaw' and 'Gallowshiels.' But while Jerviswoode schemed in London, a much more serious conspiracy was afoot there, and it was for complicity in the famous Rye House Plot, which had the assassination of Charles II. for its object, that Jerviswoode suffered the death. He was a member of Parliament at Westminster, a statesman rather than a politician. He had much learning and many accomplishments, and was a man of courtly manners and exquisite honour.

'There is for a gentleman, Mr. Baillie,' said Owen the Puritan.

It was inevitable that those who in London schemed for a cleansing and renovation of the rotten government of the day should come to Jerviswoode for council and information with regard to the Whig party in Scotland. In the murderous Rye House Plot, Jerviswoode was much too fastidious and upright a gentleman to befoul his hands, but it was for complicity in this that he was seized. In November 1683, after several months of imprisonment in London, so heavily loaded with chains that his health completely broke down, he was shipped to Leith. A fortnight's stormy voyage in November weather was not likely to improve the physical condition of an old and dying man. Although he was sick unto death, he had in Edinburgh to undergo

many protracted examinations. Late in December came the final trial. 'Bluidy Mackenzie' used all his eloquence to prove to the jury that this man was indeed a treasonable conspirator, a murderous criminal. Jerviswoode's sheath—like that of General Gordon—was almost worn out, but the sword was bright and keen as ever. He had to lean on the bar as he made his defence, and often during the trial he all but fainted, yet his reasoning was as subtly clear and logical, his eloquence as forceful as it had ever been. Suddenly he took his eyes away from President and jury and fixed them on Lord Advocate Mackenzie.

'My Lord Advocate,' he said in his clear voice, 'I think it strange that you accuse me of such abominable things. When you came to me in the prison, you told me that such things were laid to my charge, but that you did not believe them. Are you convinced in your conscience that I am more guilty now than I was at the interview where you acquitted me of guilt? Do you remember what passed betwixt us in the prison?'

It was an ugly *impasse* for Mackenzie, nor did he come out of it with much credit. With the eyes of the dying man and the eyes of the whole court upon him, he rose in annoyed embarrassment.

'Jerviswoode,' he said, 'I own what you say. My thoughts were then as a private man; but what I say here is by special direction of the Privy Council.

He '—pointing at the Clerk of the Justices—' he knows my orders.'

There was a scorn in Jerviswoode's reply that must have penetrated a skin much thicker than that of Sir George Mackenzie.

' Well, my lord, if your lordship has one conscience for yourself and another for the Council, I pray God to forgive you: I do. My lords, I trouble your lordships no further.'

Until three o'clock in the morning of Christmas Eve the trial lasted. At nine o'clock the verdict was declared. Christmas Day was nearly dawning, and it behoved the judges and jury to make an end of such bloody work ere the Christian holiday, the day of peace and goodwill, should claim their attention for more joyous things.

The Doomster pronounced the sentence.

Robert Baillie of Jerviswoode was ' to be taken to the Market Cross of Edinburgh this 24th day of December 'twixt two and four in the afternoon, and there to be hanged on a gibbet till he be dead, and his head to be cut off and his body to be quartered in four, and his head to be affixed upon the Nether Bow Port of Edinburgh, one of his quarters on the Tolbooth of Jedburgh, another on the Tolbooth of Lanark, a third on the Tolbooth of Ayr, and a fourth on the Tolbooth of Glasgow.' His ' name, fame, memory, and honours ' were to be extinct, his blood

to be tainted,—'which was pronounced for Doom.' Then the King's heralds came forward, sounded their trumpets, tore asunder the coat-of-arms that Robert Baillie had ever borne so worthily, trampled it underfoot, and made proclamation of the degradation of his family.

'My lords,' said the convicted criminal, 'the time is short, the sentence sharp, but I thank my God who has made me as fit to die as ye are to live.'

Once back in his cell he leaned on his bed in silence for a little. On being asked how he did, 'Never better,' he replied, 'and in a few hours I 'll be well beyond conception.' 'Within a little,' he said, when he kissed his wife and little daughter and his son George, and said farewell, 'we shall have a blithe and cheerful meeting.'

On the scaffold he tried to speak a few words to the thronging crowds, but, as was the custom, the drums were loudly beat, so that his voice was drowned, and the hangman put an end to him as he silently prayed.

Such was the treat provided for the people of Edinburgh, by a paternal government, on Christmas Eve 1684—the legalised murder of an honourable, cultured, Christian gentleman from the Border. The wark went bonnily on!

Henry Hall of Haughhead, a kinsman of the Earl of Roxburghe, was a Borderer of a different type from Baillie of Jerviswoode. His father, Hobby Hall,

at his property of Haughhead on the left bank of the Kale, had resisted royal authority in days when Habby Ker was King's representative on the Middle Marches. Henry Hall had been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. A hundred yards from Haughhead, by the red scaurs of the Kale, is the spot where was held many a conventicle. Hall was always a fighter. At Rullion Green, at Drumclog, and at Bothwell Bridge he fought, and the famous 'Bluidy Banner' is said to have belonged to him. It is a blue silk flag, four and a half feet long by three and a half broad, with an inscription of three lines. The first line is in Hebrew characters, and the whole inscription, in red letters, runs—

*'Jehovah-Nissi, Exodus xvii. 15.*
*For Christ and His Truths*
*No Quarter to ye active enimies of ye Covenant.'*

Much did Hall suffer for the sake of nonconformity, but he died at last, an old man, not on the gibbet, but from the wounds he got in a stout fight defending a preacher of the Gospel. He and Cargill the preacher were run to earth by the governor of Blackness in an inn at Queensferry. While Hall laid about him with a will, Cargill made his escape, but a shrewd blow on his head with the doghead of a carbine gave Hall his death wound. His captors carried him off, but he died ere they reached Edinburgh.

If Galloway claimed the most of the martyrs to the

Covenant, the other portions of the Border certainly had their share. They might not own maiden martyrs like those who perished, lashed to the stake, when the Solway came, like a stealthy, stalking, wild beast, in pay of a bloodthirsty king, to claim its prey. But in Selkirk we have a respectable woman who, for her good offices to Presbyterian ministers and other sufferers for the cause, was 'severely tost by several hands' (in a blanket, or otherwise), was incarcerated in Edinburgh Tolbooth, and narrowly escaped being sent to the Plantations; and there is scarcely a Border parish now which cannot claim that it paid toll to the religious oppressors of those times.

The lonely Border hills and glens were a natural refuge for the oppressed. In a turf hut on the face of the Carter Fell, Veitch the Covenanter hid for many a day. The 'lurgg dogs,' so skilled in tracking reivers to their death, bayed past his hiding-place in vain. Dragoons cantered their horses above and below him, but so cunningly constructed was that den that faced the whole of the south of Scotland that never did an eye discern it that was not the eye of a friend. Ruberslaw had the honour of being a sanctuary for 'savoury Mr. Peden.' At Peden's Pulpit, a rocky chasm on the top of the hill, and in the birch and hazel cleuch of Hagburn, he held his conventicles. It was when dragoons came to surprise one of those gatherings that the old man 'pit up' his

famous prayer: 'Cast the lap o' Thy cloak, Lord, ower puir auld Sandy.' And, lo, a miracle; for a 'Liddesdale drow,' thick, grey, wet, impenetrable, suddenly fell upon the hill, and the discomfited soldiers had to find their way home through it as best they could.

Up Yarrow, Renwick found a hiding-place. At Riskenhope he preached his last sermon before his martyrdom, and baptized a child—Marion Renwick, who was still alive and living at Dryhope in 1785. In Galashiels parish Claverhouse found his work cut out. At a conventicle which he surprised there in 1679 he found the Ladies Torwoodlee, Galashiels, and Newtown younger, the Laird and Lady Ashiesteel, the Lady Fernilee, and several of the Pringle clan, who had all to pay handsomely for their law-breaking, while the two ministers who preached to them were sent to the Bass. In Selkirkshire, Scotts, Pringles, and Elliots paid the fine for nonconformity; in Roxburghshire, Scotts, Elliots, Kers, Riddells, Turnbulls and Douglases. In the list we find Scott of Harden, Scott of Highchesters, Scott of Tushielaw, Scott of Todrig, Scott of Thirlestane, and Scott of Gilmanscleugh. The Scotts were warriors ever.

A goodly list of raiding names we have amongst those marked as malcontents by the Government. Scotts and Turnbulls, Telfers, Rutherfords, Armstrongs, Gladstones, Riddells, and Kers were some

of those who suffered for their temerity by imprisonment, exile or death.

The godly Mr. Blackader, son of a famous Berwickshire house, has left us, in his own vivid language, pictures of himself as he worked as one of the hunted men of the Covenant as far north as Fife, and through all the Border counties, ere he was seized and taken to die a prisoner on the Bass Rock. It was at one of his famous conventicles on Lilliesleaf Moor that the sheriff had warning of what was going on. The sheriff was the Laird of Heriot, and it may have been because his sister was one of Blackader's hearers that warning also came to the Covenanters, who shifted their ground from Lilliesleaf to Selkirk Common. Morning service was over, and afternoon service—that weariness in the flesh to those whose flesh was weak, that joy and refreshment to those whose flesh was willing and ready for martyrdom—had begun, when the sheriff rode up with his men and bade the congregation, in the King's name, at once to disperse. There might have been bloodshed there and then, for the dragoons —as Sir Walter says—were fierce, the Covenanters dour. But the sheriff's sister caught her brother's bridle-rein.

'Fie on ye, man!' she cried, 'fie on ye! The vengeance of God will overtake ye for marring so good a work!'

Apparently the sheriff was open to family influence,

for, as far as one can gather, the only one who suffered for his attendance at that conventicle was Bennett, the Laird of Chesters, to whom it cost an imprisonment in the Bass and a fine of four thousand merks.

It is from John Blackader that we hear of a communion service at East Nisbet, in 'a green and pleasant haugh, fast by the waterside,' with, for roof, 'the clear blue sky.' To him, too, we owe the account of a conventicle on a moor where the snow lay deep, and where the congregation made their own pews out of bunches of heather.

When the hunted Presbyterians found refuge across the Tweed in Northumberland, there was many a conventicle held by the side of the Tweed. On the Tweed itself, indeed, in dead of winter, when it was ice-bound, John Welch preached, so that in the event of troopers disturbing the meeting, sanctuary was not far to seek.

On the Border hills we have unmarked graves of martyrs as well as of those who fell in the old reiving days. In the Borderland, too, it was that many a worthy preacher who bore the Cross to win the Crown, first learned how to preach and to pray. At Crailing, Samuel Rutherford spent a childhood almost as much surrounded by miracles as that of St. Columba. At Mertoun, Kirkton, preacher and historian, held a charge for five years. James Guthrie, from whose martyr's crown some of the radiance is removed by his con-

scientious religious persecution of Montrose while he was in prison, was for some years minister of Lauder. John Livingston was in Ancrum, Henry Erskine at Dryburgh.

At Gateshaw Braes, in Morebattle parish, there is pointed out a spot where conventicles in those days were held. According to local superstition, if one lays one's ear close to the turf there, the sound of singing can be heard coming from far away. And whatever may be one's creed, one's form of worship, in these later days of religious freedom, there are not many places in the lands of hill and moor that lie to the south, where our eyes cannot picture the martyrs at prayer, where our ears cannot hear the music of the voices of those who sang, with the prospect of painful death before them, yet with a heart of perfect faith—

> 'I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
> From whence doth come mine aid'

## CHAPTER XII

### PRINCE CHARLIE ON THE BORDER

He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all.

MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

WHEN the Prince of Orange came to sit on the throne of Britain, peace and prosperity followed in his train. In the south of Scotland swords had been drawn for the Covenant's sake, but when those days of martyrdom were ended, it seemed as though the old fighting spirit of the Borderers had gone for ever. No longer could one say of the men of the Marches, 'War 's the Borderers' game,' nor

'The good old rule
Sufficeth them—the simple plan—
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.'

Prosperity and Romance seldom go hand in hand. Success in agriculture was the soundest means for making the ploughshare more important than the sword, and the Border counties in the early years of

the eighteenth century were already becoming deadly respectable.

When William and Mary took their places on the twin thrones of Britain, there was only a remnant left of the spirit that refused to bow to the authority that had the law behind it.

At the Town Cross of Jedburgh the burgh magistrates were drinking to the healths of their new sovereigns, when a well-known Jacobite came past. They pressed him to join them, and he took the proffered glass of wine in his hand, drank it off, then gave his 'sentiment': 'As surely as that glass will break,' he cried, 'I wish confusion to King William, and the Restoration of our Sovereign and the heir!' With that he flung the glass away with all his might. It lighted on one of the steps of the Tolbooth, trundled down, and—wonder of wonders—remained unbroken. When he heard that an admirer had sent the prophetic symbol to King William, the feelings of the old Tory towards the man who made that 'little round plucked glasse' must have waxed somewhat murderous.

In 1715, when Jacobites on both sides of the Tweed were given the chance of bringing 'the auld Stuarts back again,' the Chevalier de St. George, James VIII. by rights, was proclaimed King at Moffat. To Kelso, on October 22, 1715, marched the forces of the Stuart King, fording the Tweed, though it ran deep at the time. The Highlanders were commanded by Mack-

intosh of Borlum, the Jacobites from the west were under Lord Kenmure, and the men from the English dales were under the gallant Lord Derwentwater. On Sunday, October 23, an English chaplain preached to troops and townspeople from the text—'The right of the firstborn is his,' and all present were much edified. On the 24th the Chevalier was proclaimed King at the Market Place.

'No Union! no Malt Tax! no Salt Tax!' shouted the Kelso people. But they made no mention of fighting for the Sovereign whom they acknowledged. Their sword-arms were too busily taking care of their pockets.

It was a flash in the pan, that Rebellion of 1715; a discharge from a gun insufficiently loaded with only partially dry powder. For that flash many a man and woman had to pay a price of bitter sorrow, of death, and of pain. But the Border folk only shouted, they did not do; and perhaps one would have felt a little prouder of the men of that generation if they had been a little less cautious, a little less well balanced on the fence.

In 1745 the Borderers were once again given a chance of drawing swords, but few there were who took the chance then given.

We have seen Mary Queen of Scots riding on her white pony over the Border moors. One there is who might well ride by her side when darkness is on the hills, and winter nights are stormy, and when imagina-

tion turns the drip of the rain into the thud of horses' hoofs, the moan of the wind into the lament of those who are no longer of this earth. Strangely alike in some ways were Mary Stuart and her equally hapless descendant, Prince Charles Edward. To both those members of an ill-fated line the fairies at their birth were kind. To them was given the gift of beauty—brown eyes, radiant chestnut hair, gold-tipped, fair complexion, graceful figure. A light and happy heart, full of generosity and kind thought for others, was possessed by both. Both owned the saving grace of humour, the endearing quality of recklessness, a gallant spirit and a dauntless courage, and, above all, with all those possessions, both Queen and Prince were endowed with that indefinable possession that we call 'charm.'

The Prince who came to Scotland in 1745, to win hearts and lose a kingdom, was indeed a prince of fairy tale. 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' even in his childhood, was one to inspire with enthusiasm those whose belief through the years had been—

> 'Let howlet Whigs do what they can,
> The Stuarts will be back again.'

In 1727 the Duc de Liria, a son of Marshal Berwick, wrote of him: 'The Prince of Wales was now six and a half, and, besides his great beauty, was remarkable for dexterity, grace, and almost supernatural cleverness. Not only could he read fluently, but he knew

the doctrines of the Christian faith as well as the master who had taught him. He could ride, could fire a gun, and, more surprising still, I have seen him take a crossbow and kill birds on the roof, and split a rolling ball with a shaft ten times in succession. He speaks English, French, and German perfectly, and altogether he is the most ideal Prince I have ever met in the course of my life.'

In 1734 the Duc de Liria had his admiration for his ideal Prince intensified. Prince Charlie, a boy of thirteen, was a general of artillery in the army of French, Walloons, Spaniards, and Italians who, in the interests of Don Carlos, and under the command of the Duc, was besieging Gaeta in the kingdom of Naples. The little general gained golden opinions alike from his commander and from his men. There was nothing he would not and did not dare. Fear was to him an unknown quantity, and war a glorious game. 'His body was made for war,' wrote Lord Elcho in later days. He could give his orders to the extraordinarily mixed force under him in all their various languages, and even at that age he knew the secret of commanding the hearts of his soldiers. Even then the Prince had built for himself a castle that contained nothing less than the throne of Britain. His was to be the sword that won back a crown for his father, and gained it for himself and his heirs for ever. On shipboard, on the way from Gaeta to

Naples, his hat blew overboard. A boat was being lowered in the hope of saving it, when the Prince stopped the sailors.

'I shall be obliged before long to go and fetch myself a hat in England,' he said with a smile.

During the years that followed the Neapolitan campaign, it would seem as though every thought that Prince Charlie owned had the same trend. All he learned, all he did, was towards one end. The vision of a crown was the Sangreal of that young knight. His too amorous father complained that his son was 'backward' in such matters. Women found him shy, and his youth was a pure youth, in times when purity was rare. He would take long walks barefooted, that his feet might be inured to yet longer marches in days to come. Boar-hunting at Cisterna, long hours of rowing on the Lake of Albano, golfing in the Borghese Gardens, weeks of the hard training of hunting, shooting, and fishing expeditions—all these were gone through by the lad who loved sport for sport's sake, yet who was working to the end that at length he might go in for the greatest form of sport of all and win for himself a kingdom. 'Romance was in his blood,' writes one of his friends of this century.

It was on a July day in 1745 that Prince Charlie came to seek his own, and landed on Eriska, the little island in the western seas. On a rocky brae near

the Bay of Eriska there grows to this day a pink convolvulus. Many bits of it have been transplanted, but it will only live at Eriska; and because tradition says that Prince Charlie planted it, it is known as 'the Prince's flower.' Another flower was planted in Scotland that day by the Prince—a flower of romance, the perennial blossom of loyalty to a hopeless cause, of love for the gallant young leader of a forlorn hope. But that was a flower that bore transplantation to other lands, though nowhere did it ever blossom more fair than in the Highlands of Scotland.

A large Hebridean eagle hovered over the ship as it neared Scottish land. The Marquis of Tullibardine was the first to see it, but felt shy of speaking of it, 'lest they should have called it a Highland freit in him.' At last the old man had to speak.

'Sir,' he said to the Prince, 'I hope this is an excellent omen and promises good things to us. The king of birds is come to welcome your Royal Highness upon your arrival in Scotland.'

In Scotland the welcome Prince Charlie received from those whose aid he had hoped for was of a sort to have dashed the most sanguine of spirits. The Highland chieftains did their best to persuade him to relinquish his attempt and to return to France. There were not men enough, arms enough; there was but little money. In such circumstances to war against the holder of the Crown of Britain was simply

to meet defeat, disappointment, probably death, open-armed.

'Go home,' they advised, 'there is no other possible course.'

'I am come *home*,' answered the Prince, 'and can entertain no notion of returning. I am persuaded that my faithful Highlanders will stand by me.'

On board his ship, the *Doutelle*, Prince Charlie listened obdurately to persuasion and to argument. There listened also another lad in whose veins the ichor of romance was running hot. The Prince saw the eager eyes of Ranald Macdonald, 'young Clanranald,' upon him, and suddenly turned to him.

'Will you not aid me?' he asked.

'I will, I will! Though not another man in the Highlands should draw a sword, I will die for you!' cried the youth.

It was a simple incident, but it only wanted that piece of boyish enthusiasm to 'fire the heather.' The older men, who had been vainly trying to rule their hearts by their heads, quickly succumbed. The irresistible charm of Prince Charlie's personality swept away all difficulties. He was a Prince to love, to fight for, to die for. 'If this Prince once sets eyes on you, he will make you do whatever he pleases,' wrote Lochiel's brother to that gallant chief. There were old men, even in Sir Walter Scott's day, who had known 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' and who could not

speak of him dry-eyed; and Scott tells us that Donald Macleod, Prince Charlie's pilot in the western seas, 'never mentioned him without tender emotion.'

'I swear by moon and starns sae bright,
And sun that glances early,
If I had twenty thousand lives,
I'd gie them a' for Charlie.
I ance had sons, but now hae nane;
I bred them toiling sairly;
And I wad bear them a' again,
And lose them a' for Charlie.
We'll o'er the water, we'll o'er the sea,
We'll o'er the water to Charlie;
Come weel, come woe, we'll gather and go,
And live or die wi' Charlie.'

On August 1st the British Government offered a reward of £30,000 for the head of Charles Edward Stuart, alive or dead, and the Prince accepted the challenge by sending off the *Doutelle*, thereby burning his ships.

On August 9th he raised his standard at Glenfinnan, and from then, until August 16th, when he rode to Holyrood by way of Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags, his was a triumphal royal progress. At Gask, in Perthshire, on the way south, he had a chance of showing his natural winning graciousness when he rode through the cornfields and found the grain hanging dead ripe and uncut. In answer to his questions it was explained to him that the tenants of his good friend, Oliphant of Gask, had refused to

don the white cockade, and that their landlord had therefore 'laid an arrest or inhibition on their cornfields.' No sooner had he heard the reason when he sprang from his saddle, cut a few blades with his sword, and gave them to his horse.

'There, I have broken the inhibition,' he said. 'Now every man may gather his own.'

The wife of one of his few followers from the Border was prominent during the days that Prince Charlie held Edinburgh. Seated on horseback at the Cross, a drawn sword in one hand, the beautiful Mrs. Murray of Broughton distributed white cockades to crowds that were rapidly realising the infection of enthusiasm. The women were nearly all Jacobites—*cela va sans dire.*

'My friends, I have thrown away the scabbard!' said Prince Charlie, presenting his sword to an enthusiastic army at Duddingston on September 20th, and on September 21st the battle of Prestonpans was fought and won. The man who, the night before, reconnoitred all the enemy's approaches, riding on his white pony, a good mark for a dropping fire from the Hanoverians, pulling down for a path for his mount the stone dikes that came in his way, and taking as prisoner a gentleman whom he encountered during his work, was Ker of Graden, a Border Scot, aide-de-camp to the Prince, and one of the bravest of the brave men who went through a campaign in the face

of enormous odds. On the evening of that day, troops of King William's horse, dusty and foam-flecked, clattered into Coldstream and Cornhill. Berwick-on-Tweed saw them and their general next day. 'They ran like rabbits,' Prince Charlie wrote to his father.

'Says the Berwickers unto Sir John,
"O what's become o' all your men?"
"In faith," says he, "I dinna ken;
I left them a' this morning."

Says Lord Mark Ker, "Ye are na blate
To bring us the news o' your ain defeat.
I think you deserve the back o' the gate:
Get out o' my sight this morning."
Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye waukin' yet?
Or are ye sleepin', I wad wit?
O haste ye, get up, for the drums do beat!
O, fie, Cope, rise in the morning!'

When those who love to think of the gracious deeds of the young Chevalier read of the brutalities of the Duke of Cumberland after Culloden, it is good to think that it was Prince Charlie himself who quickly put a stop to the slaughter after his victory at Prestonpans, and that his next care was to have the wounded tended, the dead buried. Of the latter there were over five hundred redcoats and about thirty Jacobites.

'Sir,' cried one of his staff, pointing to the dead they rode amongst, 'there are your enemies at your feet.'

'They are my father's subjects,' said Prince Charlie, turning away his head.

On October 30th a council of war was held, and invasion of England was decided upon. There was disagreement with regard to a route. The Prince, to whom daring always appealed more than caution, wished to attack Wade, who was as yet unprepared for the attack, at Newcastle. The Dutch were neutralised by the capitulation of Tournay; French supplies had been safely landed at Stonehaven, and from France a handsome backing was to be expected. A victory at Newcastle would mean a certain gain in forces, and English Jacobites, whom prudence was holding back, would then certainly come forward. Lord George Murray objected to this project on account of the difficulty of crossing the swollen Tweed, in wintry weather, in the event of defeat. The word 'defeat' was not in the Prince's book of the rules of war. Lord George urged that if they went to Carlisle they would certainly be joined by the Lancashire men, who were whole-heartedly Jacobite, and by the Welsh, who were equally staunch. Then, if need be, they could march across country to Newcastle, and do what they would with Wade. The council adjourned, Prince Charlie unconvinced, until next day, when the Prince gave in to the majority, 'which seemed to give great contentment.'

On November 1st the Prince's army started on its march south. One column, at the Prince's suggestion, marched to Kelso, in order, if possible, to deceive

Wade and draw him north, so that the Highlanders should be in Carlisle ere he could reach it. The first division—baggage and artillery—under Lord George Murray, went by Peebles and Moffat. Another went by Selkirk, Hawick, and Langholm, while the Prince went by Kelso. Tullibardine, Balmerino, Elcho, Cluny, and Pitsligo travelled by Selkirk. Pitsligo was an infirm old man, and the Prince, who never failed to see to the comforts of others, lent him his carriage. The entire force mustered something between seven thousand and eight thousand men. On the night of October 31st Prince Charlie slept at Pinkie House, and next morning the march to England began.

If there were any in his army who had fancied that their young Prince was better fitted to be the hero of ballrooms than the leader of a stern campaign, they were not long left in error. The Prince never spared himself. He usually slept in his boots, ever ready for the attack. He marched at the head of the clans, target over his shoulder.

Says Maxwell of Kirkconnel, whose exactness is always beyond appeal: 'People thought it was only for a mile or two, to encourage the soldiers at the beginning, and were surprised to see him continue all day, but it was the same every day after, during the whole expedition; in dirty lanes and deep snow he took his chance with the common men, and would seldom be prevailed upon to get on horseback and

cross a river. It 's not to be imagined how much this manner of bringing himself down to a level with the men, and his affable behaviour to the meanest of them, endeared him to the army.'

Two nights were spent at Dalkeith, and on November 3rd the Prince's column marched over the lonely Soutra Hill to Lauder, where Prince Charlie found quarters at Thirlestane Castle, then unoccupied. At Lauder it was found that some of the Highlanders had lagged behind purposely, with a view to desertion, it was thought. Next morning, before daylight, their royal commander had ridden back to Channelkirk, beaten up the most of the stragglers, and marched them on to Lauder. Kelso was reached after dark on November 4th. There the Prince made Sunlaws, three miles south on the Jedburgh road, his headquarters. The house has three times been burned down since then, but a white rose that Prince Charlie planted still blooms there and keeps his memory fragrant—fit emblem for a Prince, the story of whose gallant campaign is one of the white roses that never fade, however long they may be kept between the musty pages of history.

The tidings of the advance of the Jacobite army were far from being welcome to the men of the Borders. It is amazing, and almost unaccountable, how entirely their enthusiasm was left unkindled. The descendants of those who had ever been so ready for a raid across

the Border, in whose ears the clash of steel and tramp of horses was always music, held coldly aloof when there was offered to them the chance of the finest raid that the Border had known since Robert the Bruce's time. They would take no risks. The stakes were too high; their pockets too empty. Presumably, too, they 'scunnered' at the Highland host that was presented to them as companions-at-arms. The Borderer has always been severely critical of the Highlander—'daft body,' the Highlander of the Borderer. The Borderer, in Highland eyes, is too canny by half, too much of the horse-couper; to the Borderer the Highlander is too much an undisciplined child of impulse, one who carries too much sail for his amount of ballast, and who therefore cannot be 'lippened to.' Moreover, the Border was now governed by Presbytery. The ministers held tight hands on the people who had once required the fire of Hell set to their tails, and 'the Pretender,' as they called him, the champion of the displaced Episcopalians, was anathema in the eyes of the stalwart upholders of the Presbyterian Kirk.

The parish minister at Kelso, Mr. Ramsay, who had held office there also at the time of 'the '15,' in common with the other parish ministers of Scotland, received orders from Government to report on his disaffected parishioners. Promptly the wily clergyman summoned the Jacobite gentlemen of his parish

and laid the document before them. Did any of them know of any persons disloyal to King George? he asked. Unhesitatingly they replied that every friend and acquaintance that they owned was loyal.

'Well, well,' said the Rev. Mr. Ramsay, 'I am exceedingly glad to hear so. Had there been any *dis*loyal persons in the place, I am sure that *you* must have known them; and I shall now acquaint the Privy Council that I have consulted with the most intelligent of my parishioners, who assure me that the people here are all well-affected to His Majesty's Government.'

Perhaps Mr. Ramsay may have had something to do with the fact that neither in the '15 nor the '45 did one man from Kelso put his neck in jeopardy for the Stuart cause. The Jacobite gentlemen of the neighbourhood were willing enough to meet the Prince by stealth, to assure him of their devotion, and to pledge him deep at their every meeting. That ever-tactful, ever-courteous Prince received their homage with gracious politeness, and one can but hope that through the skins of some of those who were so willing to drink to his success, so unwilling to lift a hand to hasten it, the Prince's verbal rapier-thrust may have penetrated.

'I believe you, gentlemen, I believe you,' he said in response to a vociferous toast. 'I have drinking friends, but few fighting ones, in Kelso.'

But there were fewer toasts drunk than prayers offered in the Lowlands just then. The Highland host was a ravaging army of the uncovenanted in the eyes of those god-fearing Borderers with a regard for their own property. Cattle and horses were driven for concealment into deep cleughs and glens that had many a time been used for the same purpose in the old raiding days. There are those who can repeat to us now the recollections of their grandparents who, as children, watched, round-eyed and wondering, the hasty hiding of live-stock, the digging of holes to bury family plate and other belongings. The Duke of Roxburghe had his plate and other valuables carted by night from Floors Castle and buried in the stackyard of Caverton Mill by his tenant, David M'Dougall. Nor were the fears of the people of the districts that the army marched through without good grounds. The Highlanders' motto apparently was that Heaven helps those who help themselves, and they helped themselves most liberally. There is many a tradition of housewives whose baking was interrupted by the invasion of caterans who were ready to eat her bannocks hot, half-raw; of toll levied on the henroost, stable, and byre, and even on the pockets of peaceful travellers.

'O up yon heathery mountain,
And down yon scroggy glen,
We daurna gang a-milking,
For Charlie and his men.'

At Smailholm, the story goes, a party of them overhauled the house of a tailor, and when one of them was about to cut up a web of homespun that had taken his fancy, the goodwife earnestly remonstrated.

'A day 'll come when ye 'll hae tae pey for that,' she solemnly assured him.

Scissors in hand, Tonal paused.

'An' when will she pe hafing to do that?' he asked.

'At the Last Day,' said she.

'Py Cot, an' that will pe a fery goot long credit,' said the robber. 'She wass going to pe only taking a coat, but now she will pe taking a waistcoat as well.'

At Todshawhaugh, up the valley of the Borthwick, a pious lady[1] was then keeping a diary of the adventures of her soul—a sort of spiritual temperature chart. While Highland hearts were rejoicing, she went to her knees. The Prince—never mentioned by name—was sent as a 'Just Judgment' upon her and other 'great sinners' by a righteously provoked Deity. It would seem as though all the members of her family did not see quite eye to eye with her, for, while lamenting her own iniquities which have so tempted Providence, she specially mourns for 'the sins of others, and *the sins of the family that I live in.*' In 1746, in devoutly thankful frame, she writes of her gratitude for personal mercies, for family mercies, and for national mercies. 'It was my desire that

[1] The writer's great-great-great-grandmother

the World might ring in prayers and praises and thanksgivings—and it was my desire that there might non go to Thy house *pretending to be thankfull and yet displeased at that great deliverance that the Lord had wrought for us.*'

A husband, a son, or a daughter with leanings towards the white cockade was probably the good lady's thorn in the flesh.

While some Borderers toasted and did nothing, and others wrestled in prayer, Ker of Graden kept up the old reputation of the men of the Marches by scouting along the Tweed from Kelso, under Flodden Edge as far as Wooler, to delude the enemy into thinking that the entire column was now on the march towards Newcastle. On November 6th the Prince's army crossed the Tweed and marched to Jedburgh. At Jedburgh the Prince stayed at the house then known as Blackhalls. Nos. 9 and 11 Castlegate are its present more prosaic designation. Ere they reached the town, so tradition says, another army passed before them—a phantom army that none could see. Superstitious listeners could swear that they heard the beat of drums, and believed that fairies or witches wielded the sticks. Jedburgh had ever been a witch-ridden town, and the witches who in other days had been seen dancing on the roof of the Abbey were believed to be responsible. Were they leading Prince Charlie to his doom? An old lady

who lived not so very long ago could remember watching the Jacobite dragoons grooming their horses. 'Steady there, Cope!' 'Stand about, Cope!' she heard them say as they rubbed them down.

Early next morning the column marched on, losing, by their promptitude, one good recruit. Mr. Davidson, father of Scott's 'Dandie Dinmont,' rode into Jedburgh from Charlieshope when the army was already well on its way, and had to return home. Prince Charlie led his men when they marched out of Jedburgh, over the Knot o' the Gate, into Liddesdale, and returned when they were clear of the town to whip in deserters, galloping back, when he was assured that all went well, to take his place in the van.

Down the valley of the Liddel the army came, marching, the most of them, not compactly, as a column that meant to fight, but rather as a straggling body of marauders bent on plunder. An old shepherd, Jardine by name, was seized by three of them, but set free as a valueless prey. At Hudhouse some sheep were stolen, cut up, and boiled in the only utensil that came handy, an iron pot used for tar for 'buisting' sheep. Naturally tar did not suit the Highland constitution, and one of the feasters died. The plundered shepherd, Ringan Armstrong, was given money to buy a shroud for the victim and to see that he received decent burial. The spot where Ringan

buried the man is known as 'The Highlandman's Grave' to this day.

A prettier tale than that of the greed of the Highlanders is that of a little girl from Ancrum, who met on the road near Jedburgh an army of terrifying warlike men. She knew not where to run and hide, and while she hesitated, a little frightened rabbit at bay, a 'bonnie gentleman' rode up to her, soothed all her fears, and stayed with her until the soldiers were out of sight. It may be a mere legend, but it matches well with all the other tales of Prince Charlie, whose gentle deeds gave him so firm a hold on the hearts of those who had once come within his spell.

Amongst his few Border followers he numbered a Scott—Charles Scott, brother to the laird of Gorrenberry, a gallant soldier and a faithful friend. Scott's servant, Charlie Miller, was with him through the whole campaign, and had even won gracious speech from him whom he always regarded as his rightful sovereign. In his old age Miller acted as beadle in one of the kirks of Hawick. When he came, one Sabbath morning, to escort the minister from vestry to pulpit, he was told of the death of Prince Charles Edward Stuart.

'Eh, doctor!' he said, 'A wuss ye hadnae telt us till the efternune. Ah'll get nae gude o' the sermon the day. Gin it had been the German lairdie there

wad ha' been little maen made for him, but there 'll be mony a wae hert forbye mine the day ! '

At Spittal-on-Rule some of the cavalry who went by Hawick and Langholm encamped, and during the night a daring Borderer slipped into the camp and stole a bag containing the Paymaster's money. The Jacobites made no bones about their intention of burning the village of Denholm to the ground if the money was not returned, and back it speedily came. Prince Charlie himself led his men by the Rule valley to Haggiehaugh, now known as Larriston, on the south side of the Liddel.

The Border ladies appear in a rather more heroic light in the history of that march to the south than do their much more prudent spouses. The laird of Larriston had betaken himself elsewhere when the Prince arrived, but his wife remained to do the honours, and did them well. The army slept, wrapped in their plaids, on the ground near the house, and did themselves handsomely on sheep and cattle which were sold to them by Charlie Scott, an enterprising farmer. They kept him to help them to slaughter the animals, and gave him a guinea for his trouble. But not for long was that guinea in his possession. He was followed from the camp by some caterans with a large horse-pistol, and had to give up his gold to them with as good a grace as possible. Later in the day, the same men, or some of their kind, met with one of

the clan Armstrong, and tried by the persuasion of a pistol to get from him his money. But Armstrong was true to his name. He smote the pistol out of the hand of the man who pointed it at him, expressed himself forcibly as to the value he put on a parcel of Hielandmen, and carried home the trophy as memento of 'the Rebellion.' A glen not far from Larriston was used as hiding-place for cattle and other live-stock, and for every sort of valuable, by the terrified inhabitants of the district, and fortunately for them the army marched past unconscious of the *cache* they had missed. In the morning the Prince, riding a beautiful black horse, led his column on again; and on they came, making hay while the sun from Mars was shining. Those Border hills and moors they regarded with a mercantile eye. Bacchus, as well as Mars, was a god worthy of consideration, and there was many an ideal spot in that lonely country for the establishment of a still which the gaugers would find it hard to discover. Quite a lively secret industry, run by Highlanders, was started on the Borders when Prince Charlie was once more across the sea. At the Cleughhead these lively clansmen stole a good grey mare, descendant of one who had borne Jock o' the Syde in safety from Newcastle gaol in the old reiving times. Its owner might thole other losses, but this was too much for him, and he followed the army, keeping his

horse always in view, until at the evening halt he saw a boy riding it barebacked to water. This was his chance. The boy was easily disposed of, the owner speedily up, and the miles between herself and her stable were not long in being covered by that good grey mare with her happy master on her back.

The detachment that went by Hawick visited Minto on the way, but the laird, Gilbert Elliot, Lord Justice-Clerk—no friend at any time to the Stuart cause—thought it expedient to be elsewhere when they called. Whilst he found shelter amongst the crags of Minto, his daughter, Jean Elliot—she who wrote 'The Flowers o' the Forest'—hospitably entertained the uninvited guests.

On November 8th, when the Prince's column crossed the Border near Langholm, the Prince himself was the first to ford the Esk. The Highlanders unsheathed their claymores and gave a great shout. They were in England now, and might soon expect to come to close quarters with the Sassenach followers of the 'wee German lairdie.' As he drew his claymore, Lochiel wounded his hand. It was an omen that his men did not like. Did any clansman who saw the blood flow from his chief's hand have dreams that night of the blood-stained grass on the moor of Culloden? At Reddings, a farmhouse which is now rebuilt, they spent the night, and next day, near Longtown, they were rejoined by the cavalry.

Two miles west from Carlisle, at Moorhouse, the old stronghold of William Rufus, they lay all night, and on the following day, in a heavy fog, they laid siege to Carlisle. The Deputy-Mayor, a boastful gentleman, Pattison by name, proudly declined to surrender. With a small force of invalids, and the Cumberland and Westmoreland militia to back him, he played with his guns on Prince Charlie's men from his walled town with its strong castle. No harm was done either way; but when, on the evening of the 10th, Prince Charlie, with the Highland division, went off to Brampton, ten miles further east, in the hope that the false report that Wade was advancing from the west was reliable information, Mr. Deputy-Mayor felt it was time to claim from a grateful nation the reward of his supreme gallantry. To London he despatched the joyful news that he, Pattison, had frightened away the rebel army, and begged the Powers to remember that he was no Scottish Paterson, but one Pattison, a true-hearted Englishman. But Pattison, the true-hearted, had thrown up his hat too soon. On the 13th the Highlanders were back, Lord George Murray and the Duke of Perth working in their shirts at the trenches along with their men. On the evening of the 14th the white flag was hung out by the gallant Deputy-Mayor of Carlisle. The Prince's army marched in and took possession, but it seemed an empty victory, for during the days

spent in Carlisle there were many desertions and only two recruits. The people of Cumberland were then ingenuous folk—the Lakes had no special vogue in those days—and by them the tales of the barbarities of the Highlanders were received with a simple and implicit faith. Prince Charlie heard a rustling in his room, and on hunting for the cause found a little girl of six hidden under his bed. Her mother screamed to the Prince and his aides-de-camp to spare her child, the only survivor of a family of seven. 'She had been assured from credible sources,' says Murray, 'that the Highlanders were a savage sort of people and ate all young children.'

The Lowlanders through whose country the other contingent of the Jacobite army had marched on its way to Carlisle were not likely to be much more complimentary on the subject of Prince Charlie's men. 'Cruel plunder' was what Perth and Tullibardine complained of in their men on the march to Moffat, and a man of Perth's regiment was court-martialled. At Cairnmuir, in Peeblesshire, some caterans found, as was usual, the head of the house from home, entered the mansion without a 'By your leave,' and demanded food and drink in large quantity and at once from the lady of Cairnmuir.

'By what right do you force your way into a lady's room with your bonnets on your heads?' sternly demanded the angry Lady Cairnmuir, and bonnets

were quickly doffed, and a generous hospitality given in return. It is sad to relate that, later in the day, when the refreshed company was marching southwards and met their hostess's youngest boy riding home on his pony, the pony was taken from him, apparently without one qualm.

At Darnick, near Melrose, the villagers were in a state of dire trepidation. The elders of the place took council together, and sentinels were appointed to give warning when Prince Charlie's host should appear. On the road to Galashiels an imaginative outpost saw the Jacobite army advancing one day in all the pomp and panoply of war, and galloped to Darnick with the dreadful tidings. Panic seized the inhabitants. To the shelter of the rising ground above the village they fled, led by one of the elders, his Andrea Ferrara in his hand. When the Highland host proved to be nothing more menacing than a drove of black cattle, the defenders of Darnick were much affronted men.

At Galashiels the cattle of the barony were driven off to a dene at Neidpath, and there concealed until the Jacobites had passed. The laird of Gala, like many another Border laird, felt it his duty to go from home at this special juncture, and personally superintended the transport of the cattle. His lady was less discreet. As a detachment of the army came near Gala House, a handkerchief was waved

from a window, and a lady's voice called 'God save Prince Charlie! Long live the Prince!' 'She then met them at the door,' says Jeffrey, 'and gave them a hearty welcome, placed good cheer before them, of which they partook, and departed highly pleased at the opinions expressed by the lady of the mansion.' Possibly this was the portion of the Highland army that tradition says passed up the old road on the south side of St. Mary's Loch on the way to Carlisle.

From Carlisle the army went on to Preston, Prince Charlie marching with his men through the bleak country in November weather, sharing their every hardship, meeting every discomfort with a glorious optimism, an unwavering courage and cheerfulness. The sole of one of his boots got worn out, and at the first village he came to he got the blacksmith to nail a thin iron plate on to the boot.

'I think you are the first man that ever shod the son of a king,' he said with a laugh, as he gave the man his fee.

He had usually only one meal a day, slept with his clothes on, and was up at four each morning. Crossing Shap Fell on a dreich November day, the bitter cold was almost too much for him, and for miles he walked, half asleep, holding on to the shoulder-belt of one of the Ogilvies.

Preston, Manchester, Stockport, Derby, that was the order of the Prince's itinerary. Small satisfaction he

could have got from the results of his march. A few mounted the white cockade. A score or two of recruits came to his standard. Women were always ready to give him all that was theirs to give. A forlorn hope appealed to them as it did not to the 'stronger' sex.

At Derby the death-note to the Prince's hopes was sounded. While he was pondering which was the most fitting dress to wear when he entered London —whether to enter on foot or on horseback, for 'he did not doubt that the justice of his cause would prevail,' his staff was deciding that no course was open to him but retreat. Not one man joined him at Derby; the combined British forces that he had to reckon with amounted to thirty thousand men. Wade was at Wetherby, the Duke of Cumberland at Lichfield, and a third army was gathering at Finchley Common to protect London. All that the Prince could do he did, to urge on to win all or to lose all that handful of faithful followers.

'Rather than go back, I would I were twenty feet underground!' he said, and when finally he had to bow his head to their policy, his heart also bowed and broke. 'Cast down' he was, according to Lord George Murray.

'Wha wadna fecht for Charlie?
Wha wadna draw the sword?
Wha wadna up and rally
At their royal prince's word?'

says the old song.

But the great god Expediency was stronger than love, stronger than loyalty to an almost hopeless cause. Had it been possible for his enthusiasm to carry his followers on, up to the very gates of Valhalla itself, how blessed a thing it would have been for the most tragic prince of history. But the majority was too much for him. Prudence and common-sense overrode the courage that dared all things, and lost for Prince Charlie his crown, his happiness, and his own soul.

In rainy weather that dreary retreat to Scotland was made. On December 20th, late in the evening, with the Esk in red spate, the Jacobite army forded it, a hundred men abreast. Only their heads and shoulders were seen as they waded through, but they held up the tails of their coats to keep them dry, and once they were across they danced reels on the bank until they were warm again.

One man was swept away and was rapidly drowning, but as he was carried past Prince Charlie, who crossed the ford on horseback, the Prince caught him by the hair, at the same time shouting in his scanty Gaelic '*Cohear! cohear!*'—'Help, help!'

A Sunday was spent at Moffat, most decorously, for the Episcopal chaplains who marched with the army held service, and many, believing a battle to be imminent, took the Holy Sacrament. Those who re-entered Scotland by way of Dumfries did not fail to demand and receive payment of rightful debts

incurred on their march to the south. The Dumfries people, Seceders of Galloway, Nithsdale, and Annandale, had raised a little army and looted the Jacobite baggage-waggons. Now they were heavily fined, and may have regretted their temerity. On Christmas Day the Prince's army marched into Glasgow with scarcely a complete suit of tartans or a whole pair of shoes amongst them.

Yet, at Glasgow, the Prince's hopes were allowed to rise high once more, and on the 17th of January an easy victory at Falkirk seemed to encourage him in his belief that the gods were with him.

Three months later came the black tragedy of the battle of Culloden. It was a sleety, grey April day, with an occasional fierce drift of snow, and a strong nor'-easter blowing, when Prince Charlie led his followers to dire defeat. With starvation, cruel ruin, merciless suffering, and more merciful death had the Highlanders who fought for the Prince whom they held for their rightful sovereign to pay for their share in that gloomy day, and for the months of campaigning that preceded it.

On April 18th the Prince took to the heather, a hunted rebel; and after five months of hardship, gallantly borne, he sailed for France again. He had dared all and lost all, and that while youth might still have held out to him her golden promises and highest hopes. One would be glad if Prince Charlie

had died at Culloden. Happier for all those in whose hearts he found an unalterable place had he slept, still and cold, on the field that night, the snowdrift on his brown hair, and in his heart the belief that his Sangreal might yet be attained, that still he might gain back for his line their own again.

Through many a year he dreed his weird, each year that passed carrying with it a more piteous tale of a ruined life, a gallant promise most pitifully unfulfilled.

The pictures of him in his radiant boyhood, the portrait of him as he was ere he died, are things to make the angels weep and the three fateful sisters sigh as they spin their weariful web.

That asthmatical, dropsical, intemperate old man, who complained 'I am so bothered in the head,'—was that, indeed, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie'?

One who visited him in his last days talked to him of his triumphal progress through Scotland, and of what came after. When he spoke of the payment for that hour of glory by the executions, the brutalities after Culloden, the Prince fell into convulsions.

His daughter Charlotte, an utterly devoted and loving daughter and a faithful friend to the very end, came into the room and found him.

'Oh, sir, what is this?' she said to his guest. 'You must have been speaking to my father about Scotland and the Highlanders. No one dares to mention those subjects in his presence.'

When he died on January 31st, 1788, his daughter survived him only by a few months.

A broken-down, broken-hearted, pitiful old man he was when the end came. But it is not as an old man that he lives now in Scottish hearts. The gods are sometimes merciful. So long as the gracious figure of the young Chevalier holds its own in the imaginations of the race whose king he would fain have been, one cannot say that Romance is dead. So long as hearts grow warm and eyes are ready to fill when the old Jacobite songs are sung, surely, after all, Prince Charlie did not fail to win a kingdom.

'Will he no' come back again?
Will he no' come back again?
Better lo'ed he 'll never be,
And will he no' come back again?'

. . . . . .

'A wee bird cam to oor ha' door,
He warbled sweet and clearly,
An' aye the o'ercome o' his sang
Was "Wae 's me for Prince Charlie!"
Oh! when I heard the bonny, bonny bird,
The tears cam drapping rarely,
I took my bannet aff my head,
For weel I lo'ed Prince Charlie.'

## CHAPTER XIII

### SIR WALTER'S DAY

'It is the memory which the soldier leaves behind him, like the long trail of light that follows the sunken sun.'—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THERE is one of the metrical Psalms that, more than almost any other Psalm, takes those who sing it back to the 'Killing Time.'

'. . . cruel men
Against us furiously
Rose up in wrath,
To make of us their prey.
. . . . . .
But bless'd be God,
Who doth us safely keep,
And hath not giv'n
Us for a living prey
Unto their teeth
And bloody cruelty.'

So runs the 'Old Hundred and Twenty-fourth,' and so sang the Covenanters, the men of the moss-hags. We can almost see, as we listen to its lilting wail, the scarlet coats of the dragoons as the 'persecutors' gallop across the moors, the yet redder stains of the blood of the innocent on snow or on heather. And

the caves on Cheviots and by Lowland rivers are peopled again by those who have escaped sudden death on the hillside, or crueller death in the Grass-market, and who raise thankful voices in a Psalm of David.

But one of the biggest mistakes that are made by the God-fearing people of to-day, is that of imagining that, in past days, cruel men and bloody cruelties were only to be found in the ranks of those who were followers of 'Claverse,' the 'ruffian desperado, who rode a goblin horse, was proof against shot, and in league with the Devil.' For if we compare the most merciless cruelties that were practised on the Covenanting folk, we can find none so bad as those inflicted for many generations on pitiful, helpless creatures who were harried into self-accusing dementia by those who called themselves God's ministers. In England, in Scotland, in America, the witch-finding time is one that we would fain forget. It is an ugly period of history, a time when mercy and justice seemed to sleep, and when the weak ones of the earth—half-witted men, feeble old women, hysterical girls—were cunningly stalked, hideously tortured, and finally done to death in the cruellest fashion that fiendishly cruel minds could devise. Ugliest part of it all it is, that those crimes were committed by religious people who took upon themselves the noble duty of stamping out witchcraft from the land.

At the door of James VI. of Scotland the instigation to much of the persecution may be laid. He was weakly credulous, ignorantly superstitious. The discovery of a witch or warlock practising upon his royal self was, of course, the discovery of a hideous crime, which the most sanguinary death could not adequately repay. The discovery of such a person practising upon others was to him very much what a new, well-authenticated 'ghost story' is to a member of the Society for Psychical Research at the present day. Grisly details had to be furnished for his royal behalf. He himself was more than ready greedily to interview the offenders. A 'covine' of witches to be tortured and burned was well known by his faithful subjects to be a dainty dish to set before this King.

On the Border, where superstition has always held its own, the proportion of witches run to earth was a very large one. Scarcely a Border town or village that has not near it still its 'Witches' Knowe,' where witches once held their revels, or where helpless women were burned at the stake. On the steeple of Jedburgh Abbey they used to dance once on a day.

It was an easy matter to track the offenders. A little blue mark found on the body was never a mere innocent bruise in suspected cases. It was the 'witches' mark,' placed there by the foul fiend himself. It was a simple thing then for one man or woman to vent his or her spite upon another. To the authorities of

the place, usually to the minister of the parish, they had only got to complain that they, their children, their cattle or their horses were bewitched by a neighbour. Promptly the witches' mark was sought for, tortures to elicit confession were employed, and, if the strain was kept up long enough, the wretched woman would try to save her life by pouring forth an incoherent tissue of madly impossible tales of her dealings with the Powers of Darkness. Then, naturally, death was her sentence, while for those who had the strength to persist in denial, torture was piled upon torture, and, finally, a bloodthirsty mob, having done their evil worst without taking the life of their helpless victim, burned to death their 'living prey.'

'Lord, take me out of the Devil's hands, and put me into God's,' was the prayer of one old woman when the napkin had covered her eyes ere she was 'justified' on an Edinburgh gallows.

In Berwickshire, thanks to Home of Renton, the Lord Polwarth of that time, and the Rev. John Dysart, minister of Coldingham, who seemed to be specially gifted in tracking down witches, the number of witches burned before the close of the seventeenth century was a large one. Before 1694 Home of Renton, who was then sheriff, had 'caused burn seven or eight' of them. At the Kiln Knowe at Coldingham they paid the penalty of their suspected traffickings with the Devil. From the Witches' Knowe at Lamberton the

winds carried the black smoke of their burnings across the grey sea. Auchencraw, a tiny village some miles from Coldingham, retains the notoriety of past evil doing by the proverb 'Auchencraw for witches.' Lauder has preserved in its municipal records a bill for burning a witch. £92, 14s. Scots was the total, less 'twentie seven pundis Scotis, qlk the said umq^le^ Margret Dinham had of her ain.' Selkirkshire and Roxburghshire were little behind Berwickshire in their zeal.

Of the last of the witches of Bowden parish, tradition tells a piteous tale. She was, they say, a 'well doing body,' suspected of the crimes she was accused of, Heaven alone knows why, and one of her vices in her neighbours' eyes was that she was constantly spinning, spinning, silently, ceaselessly. It may have been that, as she span, she had 'dwams,' like Tod Lapraik, but, be that as it may, she was condemned to death by an irate populace. The day of the burning came, and, as on hanging days, the crowds gathered from all parts, yet the witch span on. At length she rose, looked out of her door into the village street at the waiting murderers, and to those who watched beside her gently remarked—'The folk's no' a' gaithered yet. I 'll gang in an' spin another turn.'

What more convincing proof was wanted for her virtuous neighbours that this was a hardened daughter of Satan, ready to scorn even flames and fly off on a

broomstick at a moment's notice? Up the common of Bowden, at the foot of the Western Eildon, there is a bare spot where the witch was burned, and where the grass never grew again.

In 1719 a 'witch,' Meg Lawson, was burned at Selkirk. They were hustling her to the Gallows Knowe when, at the South Port, then known as the Foul-brig-port, she begged for a drink of water from the stagnant pool that gave the Foul Brig its name.

'Na, na,' said the man she asked, 'the drier ye are, ye'll burn the better.'

So onward she was dragged, strangled at the stake at the top of the hill, then burned to ashes.

We are apt nowadays to share with children their conception of 'witches.' A certain glamour of fairy tale surrounds them. We class them along with the other delightfully horrifying creatures of moonlight phantasy—

> 'The warlock men and the weird women,
> And the fays of the wood and the steep,
> And the phantom hunters all were there,
> And the mermaids of the deep.'

Well for us if we can forget the sordid ugliness of that 'Killing Time,' the grim superstition that cloaked itself in religion, and which, with an almost unimaginable lust of cruelty, added to the roll of martyrs the names of many a woman whose only crimes were her plain features and her feeble old age.

There were other wild women besides the witches that Church and State turned into unholy terrors, that were the dread of children in the Border in days not long since dead.

The gypsies had something more than superstition behind them to make them feared in the lands they wandered through. Even now one hears village mothers threatening children with the 'tinklers.' 'I 'll gie ye to the tinklers!' is a suggestion that is still potent to hush a child's screams. 'As black as a tinkler' means something very black, and there is severe censure in the description of a woman who 'flytes like a tinkler,' and condemnation in the term 'a randy wife,' or 'a randy.' For a randy originally meant a rawnee, or gypsy queen—the Hindustani *Rani* probably coming from the same root.

Where the 'Egyptians' originally came from, none can tell, but already in the twelfth century Scotland provided camping grounds for some of those people of mystery, who at first were known as 'Saracens.' No mere tramping tinkers and sorners were they then, but a powerful, if small, detachment of an alien race, who brought their lords with them and who claimed the hospitality of the country they had descended upon with a magnificent arrogance of vagabondage.

They had talents of their very own. They were a handsome race, dark-eyed, fine-featured, gracefully built, with the little hands, and the small, high-

instepped feet that are still the gypsies' pride. The men were skilled blacksmiths, they danced well, made good music, and their women claimed that they could see into the future. It was but natural that James IV. and his successor should be captivated by their charms. To 'Antoninus Gagino, Count of Little Egypt,' James IV. in 1505 gave a letter of commendation to the King of Denmark, and in the same year paid the sum of £7 to 'the Egyptians.' In 1530 certain gypsies 'dansit before the King (James V.) in Halyrudhous' and received through the Lord High Treasurer the sum of forty shillings, and in 1540 James V. subscribed a writ in favour of 'oure louit Johnne Faa, Lord and Erle of Littill Egipt,' giving him the right to rule his own people in his own way. How ill the Earl of Little Egypt succeeded in his rule was shown by an order in council issued in the following year, ordering banishment, with alternatives of hanging, drowning, scourging, and branding for the gypsy folk who had made themselves a pest to the country of their adoption by their neglect of the commandments with regard to theft and murder. In 1609 yet another law was passed, condemning to banishment all known 'Egiptians' found in Scotland, and in 1611 Moses Faa, David Faa, and 'Johnne, *alias* Willie' Faa, being Egyptians, and still being in the country, were taken to the Boroughmuir and hanged, while all their goods were seized by the Crown. In 1624, Captain John

Faa and seven of his gang, five of them Faas, were hanged for the crime of being Egyptians; and, a few days later, Helen Faa, John's widow, Lucretia Faa, and 'other women to the number of eleven,' were drowned for the same offence.

Whether it was a Covenanter, a Papist, a witch, or a gypsy who was the quarry of the lawgivers of Scotland, the hunting was ever efficiently carried through with a most praiseworthy conscientiousness and an admirable keenness.

Why those Ishmaelites should have chosen the Border country for their favourite camping places, it is easy to see. From Kirk Yetholm, at the foot of 'Muckle Cheviot,' there was many a possible way of swiftly retiring to England by paths unknown to the representatives of the law, and many a safe hiding-place to be found amongst the moors and the blue hills that slope upwards to the south.

According to tradition, the settlement of the gypsy folk at Yetholm came from the fact that Captain David Bennet, proprietor of the barony of Grubet and Marlfield, upon which the village stands, had his life saved by a gypsy at the siege of Namur in 1695. While attacking a breach Captain Bennet was severely wounded, and all his followers fell save one, Young, a gypsy. Young gallantly defended his captain, and when support came, he himself made a rush for the wall and seized the flag. It was all the encouragement

the troops required; they swarmed after him, and Namur was taken. Be that as it may, Captain Bennet certainly built cottages for the gypsies on his estate and granted them to the wandering folk on the most favourable terms. Nine times nineteen years was the duration of the feu conferred upon them. During his life they enjoyed his protection, a protection continued by his successors, Nisbet of Dirleton and the Marquis of Tweeddale.

It was at Kirk Yetholm that the gypsy who has been immortalised under the name of Meg Merrilees was born, some time towards the end of the seventeenth century. Jean Gordon became the wife of Patrick Faa, chief of the gypsy clan, and by him had a family of twelve, nine of them sons. In the year 1714 the career of Patrick Faa was brought to an untimely end. Sir William Ker of Greenhead, a branch of the Kers of Fernihirst, was proprietor of Bridgend, now Springwood Park—near Kelso. He was a man of uncompromising rectitude, as his fine of £2000, paid for his adherence to Presbyterianism, goes to prove. To this unyielding Covenanter, the ill deeds of the children of Ishmael must have seemed peculiarly odious. There was no fear of God before their eyes. They were a frivolous, light-minded, light-fingered race, serious only when stealing or fighting had to be done, and when fighting was in the wind, then dangerous as savage animals.

Obviously it was the duty of Sir William, as a Justice of the Peace, to cut the claws of those beasts of prey. For no very obvious reason, and apparently as much for future misdeeds as for past offences, Patrick Faa, Jean Gordon, and a following of six, mostly women, were seized one night in a barn at Sprouston and taken to Jedburgh, there to have meted out to them the justice for which that town was famed. Old Janet Stewart, Faa's mother, sought the laird of Bridgend to intercede for her son. With her she brought some testimonials to Patrick Faa's character—how obtained, and from whom, who can say—but Sir William Ker angrily threw them away and bade the old woman begone, as a 'lown.' A little later in the day two young hinds met with the heartsore old woman and deemed her a fit butt for their rustic wit. Her son and the other Egyptians were to be hanged at Jethart, they had heard, so they told her, and other merry jests of a like nature they cracked at her expense. She turned on them suddenly. '*They would hear other news of it,*' she darkly said.

Three weeks later, in a barn at Hairstones, an eavesdropping ploughman watched Janet Stewart kneel and heard her pray for 'God's malison to light upon them that had put her to that trouble.' On being asked her meaning, she owned that she referred to Ker of Bridgend, who had sent 'her bairn' to gaol.

At midnight, on March 25th, 1714, Janet Stewart's

prayer, so recently proffered, was apparently answered. The mansion-house of Bridgend was burned to the ground, obviously by incendiaries, and Patrick Faa, looking over his gaol window at Jedburgh, took much too lively an interest in the news of the event. For that fire he and his people had to pay a heavy price. As 'notorious Egyptians, thieves, vagabonds, sorners, masterful beggars, and oppressors,' and as wilful fire raisers they were brought to trial. Old Janet Stewart was scourged, bare-backed, through the town with a scourge of cords wielded by the common hangman, thereafter committed to prison to recuperate for three days, then exhibited at the Town Cross with her left ear nailed to a post for a quarter of an hour. Her son also endured scourging and had one of his ears nailed to a post for half an hour before both ears were cut off. Then, along with six women and one man who had also endured the law's mercies of scourging and branding, he was transported to Queen Anne's American plantations never to return.

Jean Gordon, or Faa, thus widowed, was left to bring up her many sons as best she could. Naturally they were a fierce and lawless brood, and Jean Gordon was not one to teach them the virtues of 'lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering.' One of her many sons, Sandy Faa, was murdered by another gypsy, Johnstone by name. The murderer was sentenced to death for his crime, but made his escape from prison.

There was, however, no peace for him, for, according to tradition, Jean Gordon followed him like a blood-hound. To Holland she tracked him—those were smuggling days—from thence to Ireland, and there had him seized and brought back to Jedburgh, where she had the pleasure of seeing him dangle on the Gallows Hill.

Some time afterwards, so the story goes, the farmer of Sourhope, on Bowmont Water, said to her—'Weel, Jean, ye have gotten Rob Johnston hingit at last.'

'Ay, gudeman,' said Jean, lifting her apron up by its corners, 'an' that a' fu' o' gowd hasna dune 't.'

According to Sir Walter, Jean's remaining sons were afterwards all condemned to die at Jedburgh on one day. The jury could not agree with regard to the heinousness of their crimes, and their punishment, until a sleeping juryman suddenly awoke and gave the judgment of a Solomon—'*Hang them a'!*'

His advice was followed, and the Faa family was sent wholesale to the gallows.

'The Lord help the innocent in a day like this!' said Jean, who was present when the verdict was given.

A staunch friend and a cruel enemy was Jean Gordon, as all traditions of the fierce old gypsy go to prove. She was an accomplished and hard-hearted robber, but she never robbed those who had been her friends, nor does legend hand on even the rumour of more than one treacherous deed—and that,

a blow in hot fight, dealt for the sake of her friends, may perhaps be pardoned her. Loyalty may even be said to have been her undoing. Jean was a faithful Jacobite, and after the '45 Carlisle was a dangerous place for the friends of Prince Charlie. On a Fair day there, in 1747, the old gypsy gave vent to sentiments that roused all the antagonism of a mob that had been made to cringe by a Jacobite army so short a time before. Ducking in the Eden was adjudged the only fit punishment for her crime, so Jean was laid hold on by cruel, willing hands, and soused in the river. She was an old woman, but she was one of magnificent physique, and she fought like a tigress. Each time that her head was allowed above water she cried aloud the confession of the faith in which she died,—'*Chairlie yet! Chairlie yet!*' It was enough to inflame with a lust for murder the brutes who had appointed themselves her judges, and again and again she was plunged into the water and held down. So did her loyal voice grow faint and fainter, and it was a murdered corpse that was laid at last upon the river bank.

The personality of Jean's grand-daughter, Madge Gordon, is one that is not yet forgotten on the Border. 'She was a remarkable personage—of a very commanding presence, and high stature, being nearly six feet high. She had a large aquiline nose, penetrating eyes, even in her old age, bushy hair that

hung around her shoulders from beneath a gypsy bonnet of straw, a short cloak of peculiar fashion, and a long staff nearly as tall as herself. I remember her well :—every week she paid my father a visit for her *awmous*, when I was a little boy, and I looked upon Madge with no common degree of awe and terror. When she spoke vehemently (for she made loud complaints) she used to strike her staff upon the floor, and throw herself into an attitude which it was impossible to regard with indifference. She used to say that she could bring, from the remotest parts of the island, friends to avenge her quarrel, while she sat motionless in her cottage ; and she frequently boasted that there was a time when she was of still more considerable importance, for there were at her wedding fifty saddled asses, and unsaddled asses without number.' Of her Sir Walter writes, 'Dr. Johnson had a shadowy recollection of Queen Anne as a stately lady in black, adorned with diamonds, so my memory is haunted by a solemn remembrance of a woman of more than female height, dressed in a long red cloak, who commenced acquaintance by giving me an apple, but whom, nevertheless, I looked upon with as much awe as the future doctor, High Church and Tory as he was doomed to be, could look upon the queen.'

It is not many years since there died one whose account of a race between him and Madge Gordon, her elf locks and red cloak flying behind her, and her

long staff in her hand, was one well worth listening to. The old man was a boy then, the encounter took place on a lonely road near Denholm, and the blood of the gypsy, who had fancied he mocked at her, was up to murder pitch. No wonder that the luckless lad believed it to be a race with death, and gave himself up for lost when he could run no more, and was clutched by brawny brown hands. But Madge tried her victim before she punished him. She asked his name and condition. His father was invariably kind to gypsies, and both he and the boy's grandfather, a sheriff clerk of Selkirkshire, had done much for her starving people in 'the dear year.' So Andrew Currie was set free with an admonition, and lived to do the groups of Sir Walter's characters that are round his monument in Edinburgh to-day.

Madge's powers of divination were firmly believed in. 'Ay, ye 've a bonny family, but there 's sair, sair dule an' wae for the best an' the bonniest o' them,' was her greeting to a proud mother who brought her handsome children to the gypsy encampment up the Ettrick road, to do honour to the gypsy queen. The mother was not likely to forget a prophecy of such evil omen, and when he who was to her her 'best and bonniest,' a fine lad of twenty-one, fell as he carried the flag of the 94th on to the ramparts of Badajos, Madge Gordon's words were supposed to be fulfilled.

Whatever the gypsy vices may have been, ingratitude

was not one of them. 'Benefits forgot,' was a thing to them unknown. 'Glee-neckit' Will Faa, King of the Yetholm gypsies during part of the eighteenth century, was over eighty when he heard of the serious illness of Nisbet of Dirleton, his generous friend through many years. He lost no time, but set off in patriarchal fashion with his tribe, their horses, tents, and asses, from Yetholm to Dirleton in East Lothian. The dying laird was able to see him, and gave him the kindest of welcomes, and Will travelled on to Edinburgh, which still was to him an unknown city. A few days later some Border farmers encountered him on the North Bridge, and Will threw up his old brown hat for joy as he proudly told them that he had seen the laird before he died. Very shortly afterwards, as he was on his homeward way, at Coldingham, death also claimed the gypsy king, and in the funeral procession from Coldingham to Yetholm, three hundred asses with their gypsy riders did honour to the might of Will Faa's name.

The minister of Yetholm, a certain Mr. Leck, was a good friend to Will Faa, and had the Christian charity to be to his faults a little blind. Late one evening the minister was riding home from paying a pastoral visitation in the Northumbrian part of his parish. Realising that he was going to be benighted, he took a short cut by a drove road between the hills, known as the Staw. He knew that he had to pass a

deserted shepherd's cottage, reputed to be haunted, but disembodied spirits had no terrors for this worthy man. As he drew near the cottage, however, he could see, in the dusk, some figures lurking behind the bourtrees in the overgrown garden, and from behind a curtain that had been hung up where once there had been the cottage door, he saw a 'grim visage' peering out. Not long did it peer. Its owner dashed forth, seized the horse's bridle, and demanded the minister's money.

'Dear me, William,' was Mr. Leck's gentle response, 'can this be you? Ye 're surely no' serious wi' me? Ye wadna sae far wrang your character for a good neighbour for the trifle I hae to gie ye?'

'Lord saif us, Maister Leck!' said the amazed William, dropping the rein and hastily raising his hat, 'whae wad ha' thocht o' meetin' ye oot owre here-away? Ye needna gripe for ony siller to me; I wadna touch a plack o' your gear, nor hurt a hair o' your heid, for a' the gowd o' Tividale. I ken ye 'll no' do us an ill turn for this mistak, an' I 'll e'en see ye safe through the eerie Staw—it 's no' reckoned a very canny bit, mair ways nor ane; but I wat ye 'll no' be feared for the deid, an' I 'll tak care o' the leevin'.'

So the minister was safely convoyed into less lonely regions, where neither spirits nor men were likely to harm him, and a delicate silence was always

preserved between Mr. Leck and his neighbour with regard to this little incident in their friendship.

Ere the gypsies fell from their high estate, they left, in the Border, memorials of more than one bloody battle. Such was the battle of Romanno in Peeblesshire, between the Shaws and the Faas. There were of the Faas four brethren and a brother's son, and of the Shaws a father and three sons, with several women on each side. Old Sandy Faa—'a bold and proper fellow'—was killed, as was also his wife, then with child, and his brother George was dangerously wounded. For this, four months later, in February 1678, Robin Shaw and his four sons swung in the Grassmarket, 'Bluidy Mackenzie' varying his somewhat monotonous labours as King's Advocate with Covenanters as quarry to hang this little batch of the uncovenanted heathen. John Faa was hanged a few days later, also for murder.

In 1772 there took place the battle of Hawick Brig, in which Ruthvens—with their chief, known as the 'Earl of Hell'—Kennedys and Taits were all furiously engaged, and in which Jean Gordon herself struck some shrewd blows, and one most treacherous one. According to the chronicler 'Every one engaged in it, save Alexander Kennedy, was severely wounded, and the ground on which they fought was wet with blood.'

So desperate were the gypsy battles that, more than once, the fencibles of the district had to be called

out to enforce peace, though in the Border one has no tales of sieges, such as that endured one Sunday by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, who, in the face of heavy odds, had to defend his house against a furious gypsy band. They were indeed a force to be reckoned with, even in the latter part of the eighteenth century, when Jane Welsh Carlyle's gypsy ancestors, the Baillies, rode fine horses, wore long green riding coats, cocked hats, boots, and spurs, and were armed with broadswords, while the ladies of the tribe were also handsomely mounted and finely attired on the days when they rode to the country fairs. A gallant lover enough, no doubt, was Johnnie Faa, with whom the Countess of Cassilis fled from her husband.

'The gypsies cam to our gude lord's yett,
And O but they sang sweetly;
They sang sae sweet and sae very complete
That doun cam our fair lady.

. . . . . .

"O come with me," says Johnnie Faa,
"O come with me, my dearie;
For I vow and I swear, by the hilt o' my sword,
That your lord shall nae mair come near ye."'

There are only a very few of the real old 'Saracens' left now on the Border. Intermarriage with peasant stock, or mésalliance with members of the mere tramping population of Irish or Scottish origin, have thinned the ranks of a peculiar people. Yet, here and there, in Border lanes or on commons, one

still comes across their encampments, and at the few remaining Border fairs they muster gallantly. 'Muggers' is the degenerate title which they now possess, but at Yetholm one may still see men, women, and children, dark-eyed and brown-skinned, and owning a dialect of their own. Little gypsy colonies are still found in Berwick, Selkirk, Kelso, Jedburgh, Coldstream, and in other Border towns, and most of the Border villages own at least one family of the true 'mugger' type. Midlem, the little white-housed village that suns itself on the slope looking southward to the Cheviots, midway between the Eildons and the Yarrow hills, owns a dark-skinned family of Douglases, strangely out of place in a hamlet famed as a stronghold of Original Seceders—the staunch 'Auld Lichts.' Intermarriage with the people of the land may have changed the habits of some of the 'Egyptians.' Yet the gypsy spirit is ineradicable. They who come of gypsy stock are almost always 'children of water,' restless as the sea. To them the open road is ever dear, and even after generations of admixture with sound Scottish blood, the gypsy eyes—the soft, dreamy, dark eyes of the Oriental—are sure to reappear, the gypsy nature to reassert itself.

It was only to be expected that, to the gypsies, smuggling was a delightfully congenial employment. When reiving was no longer the mode on the Border, the inherent lawlessness of the Border folk still found

an outlet in baffling the excisemen, and the gypsies were invaluable allies. Illicit stills abounded amongst the hills, and collies with bladders strapped across their backs often baffled the gaugers as they carried the Border brewed 'mountain dew' to certain places on the English side. At Yetholm, at one time, one-fifth to one-sixth of the population was engaged in smuggling, while there was annually sold from Yetholm £10,000 to £20,000 worth of whisky. At Boulmer on the Northumberland coast, at Eyemouth, and at many another spot on the rugged Berwickshire coast—more especially at those places where on stormy days the North Sea rushes, foaming, up dark caves that seem still to keep the horror of bloody deeds in long past days—the smugglers plied their trade.

The son of 'Glee-neckit Will,' young 'Wull Faa,' a sturdy ruffian, equally famed for his skill as pugilist and as fiddler, was a distinguished smuggler in his day, and many a cargo of Hollands did he safely bring from the coast by the lonely hill roads. One night, on their way from Boulmer, he and his men were surprised by a party of gaugers, and a fierce fight followed. Will had at last to take to flight. The chase was hot. He jumped his horse over a dike to get to the open country, but a mounted exciseman followed him, found the gypsy chief's horse stuck in a bog, and its rider practically at his mercy. It took more than that,

however, to daunton Will Faa. With a heavy cudgel he parried his adversaries' cutlass blows until his weapon was whittled to pieces and his right hand shorn to the bone.

'Give in! or I'll cut off your head!' said the representative of the law.

Ruefully Will did as he was bid.

'Ye 've spoilt the best bow hand in Scotland,' was all the complaint he made, as he looked at his helpless hand.

'There is canny Will Faa o' Kirk Yetholm,
He lives at the sign o' the Queen;
He got a great slash i' the hand
When comin' frae Boumer wi' gin.'

Only a few years ago, the pulling down of old houses at the little village of Spittal, at the mouth of the Tweed, did away with the traces of some of the last of the Border smugglers, one of whom was tried and 'justified' at Jedburgh in the days when Sir Walter was sheriff.

The eighteenth century was very near its close when Jedburgh saw the execution of yet another smuggler, Jimmy Trotter by name. Jimmy was a stalwart villain, big alike in frame and in daring. His crime was the theft of an old horse, worth thirty shillings, and, for this, he was condemned to die. During his trial his wife sat by him, her baby at her breast, and, as he listened to the evidence, the criminal

would ever and again put out his hand and pat the child. When sentence was given, his wife sobbed heart-breakingly, but Jimmy said never a word. As his gaolers brought him out of court, he threw out his arms, in wrath or in despair—'My dying day is fixed for the 25th,' he said to the onlookers, and, with a sweep of his arms that was like that of a scythe, he mowed down half a dozen of those on either side of him. In prison he was chained to a block of stone from a neighbouring quarry, but easily he jerked the chain from its rivet and carried the rock from the middle of his cell to block his door. He might have stood a siege from this well-fortified position and won in the end, but he owned a reiver's heart—too soft where gratitude, and, more especially, gratitude towards women, was concerned—and it was his undoing. He made his escape one night, but his gaoler's wife had been kind to him, and he lingered to thank her. His gratitude cost him his life. Jimmy was seized ere he was well away, and met his death on the gallows of Jedburgh 'with gleeful heroism and a stout heart.'

Many times, as we talk of the romance that still lingered on the Border in the eighteenth century and early in the nineteenth, we are apt to use the phrase 'in Sir Walter's day.' In Sir Walter's day there still were smugglers and gypsies, still those who believed in witchcraft and fairies. There were still fairs to be looked forward to from year to year by

eager country folk who there couped horses, replenished household furnishings, bought blue ribbons for fair maids, and gingerbread cavaliers, well carraway-seeded, for children, and who, not unfrequently, ended a thoroughly enjoyable day by taking part in a handsome tulzie where fierce blows were given as willingly as in the old reiving times. At the fairs the Border war-cries were heard when otherwise they were well-nigh forgotten. 'Jethart's here!' meant a bad hour for some of the Hawick callants with their counter-cry of 'Teribus!' while at Bellingham Fair heads were cracked by the men of the wild glens of the Tarret and Tarset burns to the accompaniment of

> 'Tarret and Tarset head
> Hard and heather bred,
> Yet—yet—*yet*——!'

And woe betide the head that was cudgel banged at that last '*Yet.*'

In Sir Walter's day it was, too, that churchyards at night came to possess fresh terrors for children and for timid wayfarers. Many a tale of the resurrectionists and their ghoulish crimes still lingers on the Border. At Coldingham there is yet to be seen a house with the well-arranged appliances of those whose trade was that of desecrating graves, and the rusty iron cages that still cover grass-grown mounds in the little country kirkyards tell of the anxious care of

SIR WALTER'S VIEW FROM BEMERSYDE

those who would fain have protected from human jackals the graves that they held dear.

In Sir Walter's day the presence of French prisoners gave a touch of romance and some extra life to the society of the sleepy little Border towns in which they spent their days of exile. And it was in his day that the Border people showed that they still were fighting men, and that under a foxhunter's, a ploughman's, a minister's, or a weaver's coat there still beat the fearless heart of the Border bred. The firing of the beacons at the False Alarm of 1804 brought out as gallant a muster of men to fight the French as had ever, in the days of their ancestors, gone forth to fight their English foes. Sir Walter was, of course, that night out with his troop, glorying in the fine gallantry of it all. 'Fear is an evil that has never mixed with my nature,' he himself has written.

It is a land of romance, this Border land of ours, and many there are who come to it now from far across the sea, as pilgrims seeking a shrine. It has become a favoured pilgrimage for our kind American cousins, some of whom come with a perfect realisation of their reasons for coming, and with a most generous appreciation of all that they see. To them, as to us, it is an enchanted land, but their eyes might never have beheld it, or might have beheld it blindly, had it not been revealed to them by the magic touch of the wizard, Walter Scott.

'I have brought you like the pilgrim in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions hereabouts. Yonder is Lammermuir and Smailholm; and there you have Galashiels and Torwoodlee, and Gala Water; and in that direction you see Teviotdale and the Braes of Yarrow, and Ettrick stream winding along like a silver thread to throw itself into the Tweed.'

So said Scott to Washington Irving, but it is not the mere geographical lie of the land that he showed. He made the dead past live again. He showed the very heart and soul of the Border people, one of whom he was so proud to be.

As we look along the gloriously wide stretch of Border country on a clear autumn day, with sun on the russet and golden and green of the opulent Tweedside woods, sun on the long blue line of hills that runs from the Solway to the North Sea, the grey peel tower of Smailholm on its dun-coloured hill speaks to us of the little lame boy who lay there through the long days, drinking in with eager heart and eager eyes all the beauty and poetry of the land that he was so completely to make his own. From every place on the Border he yet speaks to us. In the grey ruins of Melrose lies the Bruce's heart, but Sir Walter's heart has found a wider resting-place. Himself he records that he knew old men who had lived in Prince Charlie's day, and who could not speak of him dry-

eyed. One is glad to have known men who knew Sir Walter and whose eyes filled as they spoke of him who ruled the Border, who rules the hearts of the Scottish people, as few kings have ever done.

He was no king who sat aloof, wielding a pen as sceptre, ruling despotically from afar. He was one of the few who had come into the world loving all humanity, with a heart great enough to understand the hearts of all other men, and, so understanding, being all-merciful. '*Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.*'

'He speaks to every man as if they were blood relations,' is the testimony of one of his own servants. Who can wonder that he made of all the world his servants, and that his kingdom is one that goes on from generation to generation?

What heart that knows him does not ache at the thought of those weary years when he fought a Homeric fight with evil fortune and with cruel disease. His wounds were deep; his genius was maimed, his happiness slain, yet, to the end, he fought on.

To Lockhart at Douglas he quoted, so shortly before his fight was ended, the old ballad that he loved—

> 'My wound is deep, I fain would sleep;
> Take thou the vanguard of the three,
> And hide me by the bracken bush
> That grows on yonder lilye lee.

O bury me by the bracken bush
Beneath the blooming brier,
Let never living mortal ken
That a kindly Scot lies here.'

At the end, he gently slept. 'It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still, that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes.'

The Border country mourned for its lover on that dark September day in 1832 when the long, long train of carriages crept up the hill of Bemersyde on the way to Dryburgh. Black clouds hung over Cheviots and Eildons, and the Ettrick and Yarrow hills; the silver Tweed was dark, and there was a fierce, sobbing wind. On the height above Old Melrose the procession came to a sudden halt. Sir Walter's own horses drew the hearse, and they had stopped at his favourite view, that their master might once more look on the dear land that he loved, ere they took him to sleep amongst the grey ruins under whose shelter he now lies, the murmur of the Tweed his eternal lullaby.

It is not for us to speak his valediction. Another Borderer who loved him has already done so.

'Here in the heart of your own country, among your own grey, round-shouldered hills (each so like

the other that the shadow of one falling on its neighbour exactly outlines that neighbour's shape), it is of you and of your works that a native of the forest is most frequently brought in mind. All the spirits of the river and the hill, all the dying refrains of ballad and the fading echoes of story, all the memory of the wild past, each legend of burn and loch seem to have combined to inform your spirit, and to secure themselves an immortal life in your song. It is through you that we remember them, and in recalling them as in treading each hillside in this land, we again remember you and bless you.'

# INDEX


Aebba, 77, 84.
Aedelfrid, 50.
Aelred, 124
Agricola, 8
Aidan, 67-70, 72.
Aidan the Scot, 49, 50, 51, 57.
Albany, Duke of, 266.
Ambrosius Aurelianus, 36.
Ancrum Moor, 322.
Angus, Earls of, 269, 270, 271, 311, 319, 321.
Annan Street, 37.
Anne of Brittany, 307.
Apel Ringie, 55.
Ardderyd, Pass of, 49, 88.
Argyll, Marquis of, 340.
Armstrong, H., 252, 253.
Armstrong, Johnny, 189-194.
Arran, Earl of, 228, 284, 319, 322.
Arthur, 38-45.
'Arthur's O'on,' 40.
Arundel, Earl of, 159.
Astaroth, hill, 22.
Attacotti, the, 29.
'Auld Wat,' 202-211.
Avenel, R. de, 126.
Averroës, 99.

Baillie, R., 334.
Baillie, R., of Jerviswoode, 380-384.
Balliol, J., 142.
Bamborough Castle, 45, 67, 185.
Bannockburn, battle of, 158.
Bastie, Sieur de la, 267.
Beaton, Janet, 226.
Beaugé, M., 324.
Bede, 67, 77.
Belling Hill, etc., 22.
Beltane fires, etc., 22.
Bennet, Captain D., 432.
Bernard, 124.
Bernicia, 45, 46.
Berwick, 142, 161, 163.
Biscop, Bishop, 117.
Blackader, J., 388.
*Black Book of Carmarthen*, 89.
Black Hill, the, 35, 105.
'Black Ormiston,' 251.
'Bluidy Banner,' the, 385.
Boisil, 73, 76, 82.
Borcovicus, 13, 25.
Borthwick, 64.
Bothan, 74.
Bothwell, Earl of (Hepburn), 225-247, 260.
Bothwell, Lord (Stuart), 260, 262.
Bowden, 74, 213.
Bowes, Sir G., 254.
Branxholm, 256, 257.
Bremner, J., 356.
Brigantes, the, 7.
Britons, the, 5, 48, 49.
Broughton, Lady, 275.
Browning, R., 208.
Bruce, Robert the, 144, 149-154, 165, 166, 170-174, 182.
Buccleuch, Lady of, 196, 268.
Buchanan, G., 235.
Bukame, Captain, 369, 370.

Cademuir, 40.
Caerlanrig, 190.
Cairnmuir, 416.
Caledon, Wood of, 39, 70, 92, 121.

Caledonians, the, 8, 10, 14.
Camden, W., 200.
Camelon, 42.
Cameron, R., 359, 360.
Carey, Sir J., 276, 278.
Carey, Sir R., 178, 212, 249.
Carlisle, 217, 415.
Carmichael, Sir J., 326.
Carrawburgh, treasure of, 24.
Cary's *Memoirs*, 198.
Cassiterides, the, 4.
Catrail, the, 36.
Cedde (Chad), 68.
Celts, Celtic, 5, 21, 22.
Charles I., 331, 332, 335, 338, 350.
Charles II., 350, 353.
Charles Edward, Prince, 394-423.
Charltons, the, 278.
Chesters (Cilurnum), 13, 28.
Cheviot sheep, 355.
Chirchind, battle of, 50.
Christianity, introduction of, 52-55.
Claverhouse, 337, 371, 387.
Clerk, Sir J., 443.
Cockburn of Henderland, 187-188.
Coldingham, 69, 118, 169.
Coldstream Guards, 328.
Columba, 50, 56-61.
Cork, Earl of, 198.
Cormac, 67.
Covenant and Covenanters, 333, 336, 354-390.
Craigmillar Castle, 243.
Crannogs, 18.
Cranston, Sir W., 292.
Croc, Le, 235, 243.
Cromwell, O., 327.
*Crown*, the, 355.
Culloden, battle of, 421.
Culross, 62.
Cumberland, Duke of, 401, 419.
Currie, A., 439.
Cuthbert, 70-86, 119.

Dacre, Lord, 190, 317.
Dalriada, 49, 57.
Darnick, 417.
Darnick, battle of, 271.
Darnley, Lord, 229, 231, 232, 235, 239, 240, 244.
David I., 119-128, 141.
David II., 169, 179.
Dawstane, battle of, 51.
Deira, 46.
Derby, 419.
Derwentwater, Lord, 393.
Diormit, 59, 60.
Donald Bane, 118.
Douglas, Earl of, 297-307.
Douglas, J., 152-175.
Douglas, Lady, 362.
Douglas, Marquis of, 345.
Douglas of Blackhouse, 283.
Douglas of Drumlanrig, 256, 317.
*Doutelle*, the, 398, 399.
*Dowie Dens of Yarrow, The*, 282.
Druids, the, 5, 22, 23, 24, 87.
Drummelzier, 91, 92.
Dryburgh, 123, 137-140, 166.
Dryfe Sands, battle of, 286.
Drythelm, 134.
Dunbar, battle of, 143.
Dunbar, Earl of, 195.
Duns Law, 35.
Durham, 299.
Dysart, J., 427.

Eadgar, 118, 119.
Eadwine, 66.
Earlston, 105.
Eata, 68, 70, 73, 76, 79
Ecgfrid, 82.
Edinburgh, 39.
Edward I., 142, 143, 145, 147, 151, 153.
Edward II., 158, 163, 164, 165, 166.
Edward III., 167.
Eildon Hills (Trimontium), 14, 35, 43.
Elizabeth, Queen, 220, 249, 254.
Ella, 46.
Elliot, Jean, 414.
Elliot, Jock, 232, 236.
Elliot of Stobs, 271.
Elliot, Sir G., 207, 210.
Elliot, Sir G. (Lord Justice-Clerk), 414.
Elliots, the, 277.

Enterkin, the, 372-375.
Eriska Island, 396.
Erskine, Henry, 361, 390.
Ettrick, 39.
Ettrick Forest, 121, 126, 145.
Eure, Lord, 205, 206.
Eutychus, 25.
*Eve of St. John, The*, 139.
Evers, Lord, 318, 319, 321, 322.

Faas, the, 433, 434, 435-442, 445.
*Faerie Queen, The*, 221.
Fala Moss, 327.
Falkirk, battles of, 147, 421.
Fiennes, Sir G. de, 157.
Flodden, battle of, 307-314.
Flower of Yarrow, 203.
Fordun, 144.
Forster, Sir J., 243.
Foster, Sir J., 325, 326.
Frederick, Emperor, 98, 99.
Friars, The, 213.
Froissart, 167, 170, 296, 302, 306.

Gagino, A., 431.
Galashiels, 417.
Galloway, 353.
Gateshaw Braes, 390.
Geddes, Jenny, 332.
Glasgow, 63, 66, 421.
Goidels, the, 5, 17.
Gordon, Jean, 433-437, 442.
Gordon, Madge, 437, 438.
Graeme, Lady, 197.
Graemes, the, 293.
Graham, Sir J., 148.
Graham, Sir R., 338.
Grey, Lord, 196, 268.
Grierson of Lagg, 372.
Guinevere, 42.
'Guledig,' 38.
Guthrie, J., 389.
Gypsies, 430-447.

Haddocke's Hole, 178.
Hadrian, 10.
Hadrian's Wall, 11-14, 21, 28, 30, 31.
Haig, R., 321.
Hainault, John of, 167.
Hall, H., 384, 385.
'Harden's Drive,' 209.
Hart, Sir R., 304.
Hawick Brig, battle of, 442.
Henry viii., 307, 317, 319, 322.
Hepburn, Bishop, 225, 247.
Hermitage Castle, 237.
Heron, Lady, 309.
Heron, Sir J., 326.
Hertford, Earl of, 323.
Hexham, 117.
Hoddam, 65.
Hodgson, 28.
Hogg, J. (Ettrick Shepherd), 208, 211.
Holydene, 55, 122, 213.
Holyrood, 123, 165.
Home, D., 268.
Home, J., 273.
Home of Renton, 427.
Home, Earls of, 267, 314, 342.
Honorius, 30.
Hornshole, 317.
'Hosts,' the, 3.
Humber, river, 7.
Hume, A., 365-369.
Hume, Grisell, 375-380.
Hume of Godscroft, 163.
Hume of Halyburton, 378.
Hume, Sir P., 375-380.
Hunsdon, Lord, 255-257, 277.

Ida, 45, 46.
Inchkeith, 17.
Iona, 55.

Jacobites, the, 392-423.
James iv., 186, 307-316, 431.
James v., 187-194, 260, 266, 269.
James vi., 92, 221, 231, 258, 291, 331, 426.
*Jamie Telfer*, 209.
Jedburgh, 123, 129, 130, 159, 185, 235, 258, 392, 409.
Johnston, Laird of, 284-287.
Johnston, Sir James, 287.
'Joyous Garde,' 44.

Julius Cæsar, 5.

Kelso, 123, 127, 128, 149, 242, 392.
Kenmure, Lord, 393.
Kennedy, Mrs., 261, 262.
Kentigern, 61-66, 90.
Ker, 'Habby,' 289.
Ker, Margaret, 275.
Ker of Cessford, 202, 271, 273, 275, 276, 320.
Ker of Fernihirst, 202, 252, 254, 258, 259, 272, 288, 320, 323.
Ker of Graden, 268, 400, 409.
Ker, Sir R. (of Cessford), 212, 221, 255, 258.
Ker, Sir W., 433, 434.
Killing Time, The, 353.
Kinmont Willie, 202, 214-222.
Kipling, R., 28, 87.
Kirkcudbright, 76.
Kirk o' Field, 244.
Knollys, Sir F., 249.
Knox, J., 242, 273, 331, 332.

Lang, A., 224.
Latoun, Sir B., 318, 319, 321.
Laud, Archbishop, 332.
Lauder, 404.
Lauriston, Lord, 290, 291.
*Lay of the Last Minstrel, The*, 226.
Leek, Mr., 440, 441.
Lennox, Earl of, 230.
Leslie, General, 334, 341, 344, 346.
Leslie, N., 320.
Lesly, Bishop, 198, 265.
Lilliard, Maiden, 322.
Lilliard's Edge, 322.
Lilliesleaf Moor, 363, 365, 388.
Lindisfarne, 67, 79, 84.
Lindsay, R. (of Pitscottie), 312, 314.
Liria, Duc de, 394, 395.
Livingston, J., 358, 390.
Lochiel, 414.
Loch Leven Castle, 246.
Lour, the, 40.
Lundie, W., 304.
Lupus, 19.

Macdonald, R., 398.
MacDougall, Sir H., 366.
Mackenzie, Sir G., 361, 368, 382, 442.
Macleod, D., 399.
MacLeod, Dr. N., 2.
Maetae, the, 14, 19.
Maiden Way, the, 21.
Maitland of Lethington, 232, 236, 251.
Malcolm Ceannmore, 94-96.
Malory, Sir T., 42.
Mary Queen of Scots, 221, 223-263.
Maximus, 30.
*Maxwell's Goodnight*, 288.
Maxwell, Lords, 284-288, 292.
Maxwell of Kirkconnel, 403.
Maxwell, Sir J., 304.
Melrose (Mailros), 69, 73, 83, 86, 106, 122, 131-135, 165, 170, 174, 235, 319, 342.
Melville, Sir J., 260.
Menteith, Sir J., 148.
Merlin, 88-93.
Midlem, 444.
Miller, C., 411.
'Minstrel Burne,' 203.
Mithras, 25-27.
Moat of Liddel, 49.
Modred, 41.
Monk, General, 328.
Montrose, 333, 334, 336, 353.
Mons Graupius, 9, 10.
Moray, Earl of, 304.
Moray, Regent, 194, 228, 236, 239, 254.
'Muckle-mou'd Meg,' 208.
Murray, A., 146.
Murray, Lord G., 402, 403, 415, 419.
Murray, Mrs., 400.
Musgrave of Bewcastle, 209.

Napier, A., 290, 291, 345.
Napier, M., 348.
Nennius, 41.
Nevill, Sir R. de, 162.
Newstead, 14, 21.
Nicoll, J., 327.

Ninestanerigg, 23, 50.
Ninian, 54.
Nisbet of Dirleton, 440.
Normans, the, 97, 125.
Northumberland, Anne, Countess of, 251, 252.
Northumberland, Earl of, 250-253.
Northumbria, 46, 94.

Oswald, 66.
Oswin, 68, 79.
Otterburn, battle of, 301-307.

Pacification of Berwick, 336.
Pattison, 415.
Peblis, W. de, 166.
Peden, A., 354, 363, 386.
Peel Fell, 36.
Peel towers, 181-185.
Peniel Heugh, 320.
Pentland Hills, 15.
Percy, H. (Hotspur), 299-302.
Percy, R., 299, 304.
Perth, Duke of, 369, 415, 416.
Philiphaugh, battle of, 344-348.
Phœnicians, the, 4.
Picts, the, 15-19, 29, 30.
Pius II., Pope, 195.
Polwarth, Lord, 198.
Porteous of Hawkshaw, 327.
Preston, 418.
Prestonpans, battle of, 400.

Ragman Roll, 143.
'Raid of Redeswire,' 326.
Raiders and Reivers, 176-222.
Ramsay, Rev. J., 405.
Randolph, 155, 163, 164, 165, 167.
Renwick, J., 387.
Resurrectionists, 448.
Rhydderch Hael, 65.
Richmond, Sir T., 159, 161.
Riddell of Newhouse, 364.
Rizzio, D., 231.
Romanno, battle of, 442.
Romans, the, 6, 7, 29, 31, 34.
Rossetti, D. G., 223.
Rothes, Earl of, 355.
Roxburgh Castle, 155.
Roxburghe, Duke of, 407.
Ruberslaw, 35, 354, 386.
Rutherfurd, Sir N. de, 145.
Rutherford, S., 389.
Ruthven, Lord, 258.
Rye House Plot, 381.

Sadler, Sir R., 200.
St. Abbs, 35.
St. Asaph's, 65.
St. Boswells, 21, 73.
St. Clair, Sir W., 173.
St. George, Chevalier de, 392.
Saxons, the, 15, 29, 48.
Scilly Isles, 4.
Scot, Michael, 97-105.
Scots, 18, 29, 30.
Scott, A., 188.
Scott, J., 358.
Scott of Bowhill, 290.
Scott of Satchells, 180, 217.
Scott, Sir W., 2, 36, 116, 186, 438, 449-453.
Scott, Sir W. (of Buccleuch), 270, 272, 276.
Scott, W., of Harden, 202-212, 361.
Scotts of Buccleuch, 202, 207, 212, 214-222, 254, 258, 259, 260, 291, 320.
Scotts of Sinton, 180, 202.
Scrope, Lord, 196, 215, 218.
Selkirk, 121, 122, 127, 308, 342, 347, 388.
Servanus, 63.
Severus, 19-21.
Shairp, J., 330.
Sharpe, Archbishop, 357.
Sidley, Sir R., 295.
Sidney, Sir P., 296.
Simeon of Durham, 93, 96
Sinclair, Sir J., 305.
Skirmish Hill, 166.
Smailholm, 450.
Smuggling, 444.
Soney, the Piper of, 344.
Spalding, P. de, 163.
Spenser, E., 221.

Stevenson, R. L., 176.
Stewart, Janet, 434, 435.
Stirling, 145.
Stow, J., 315.
Surrey, Earl of, 200, 309-313.
Surtees, 264.
Sussex, Lord, 254, 256.
Suthrenwud, 55.
'Sym of the Ledehouse,' 156, 157.

Tacitus, 9.
Taliessen, 15, 22, 47, 88.
Tennyson, A., 33, 43.
Thenew, 61, 64.
Theodoric, 47.
Theodosius, 29.
Thomas the Rhymer, 105-113, 296.
Throndssön, A., 227.
Tiberius, 53.
Traquair, Earl of, 342, 349.
Trotter, J., 446, 447.
Tullibardine, Marquis of, 397, 416.
Turnbull of Bewlie, 364-367.
Turnbull of Sharplaw, 364.
Turnbulls, the, 186, 320, 369.
Tweedies of Drummelzier, 279-281.
Tyne (north), river, 8.

Urien, 42, 47.

Valentia, 30.
Veitch, W., 386.
Veitches of Dawick, the, 279-281.

Wade, General, 419.
Wallace, Sir W., 144-150.
Waltheof, 132, 133.
Wardens of the Marches, 201, 212.
Watling Street, 20.
Wat o' Harden, 202-212.
'Watty Wudspurs,' 208.
Wedale, 41.
Weir, Major, 351.
Welch, J., 359, 360, 389.
Westmoreland, Earl of, 250, 251, 254.
Wheel Causeway, the, 20.
Whithorn, 54.
'Wicked Wat of Branxholm,' 269.
Wilfrid, 117.
William of Malmesbury, 120.
William the Lion, 127, 141.
William III., 391, 392.
Williamson, D., 364.
Winter, J., 376, 378.
Wiseheart, G., 357.
Witch persecution, 425-430.
Wodrow, R., 357, 368.
Wyntoun, A., 124.

Yarrow, 37, 39, 187, 346.
Yetholm, 432, 433, 444.
Young, L., 316.

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